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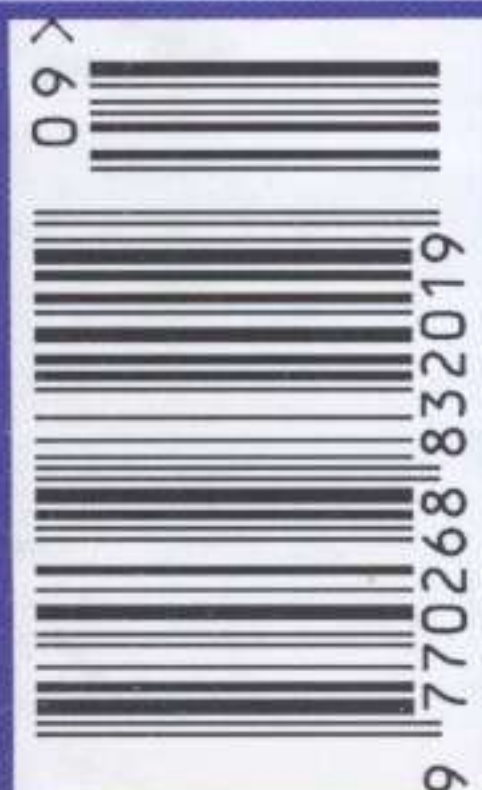
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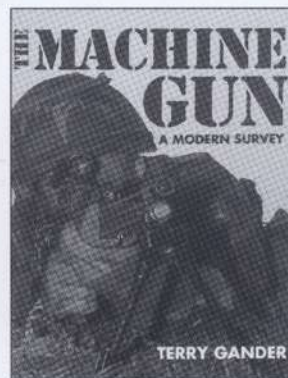
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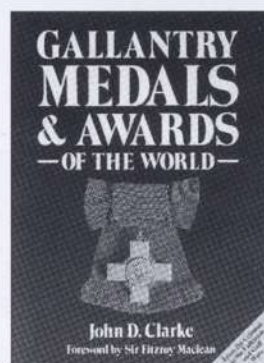
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Our front cover illustration shows members of the 15th King's Light Dragoons (Hussars), 95th (Rifle) Regiment of Foot and 68th (Durham) Regiment of Light Infantry reconstructing the famous Charles Hamilton Smith painting, on which 'more anon'. (Neil Leonard.)

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27

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34

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MIKE McCORMAC

35

## *Veterans of Kirbekan, Soudan, 1885*

CHRIS COOGAN

39

## *Gallery: The Young Alexander*

DAVID COWARD Painting by RICHARD HOOK

Editor's Notes .....8 Letters to the Editor.....8

The Auction Scene.....9 Book Reviews.....32

On the Screen.....38

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## BREN GUN COMPETITION

WITH NEARLY 1,000 entries from all around the world, over 600 of them correct in every detail, our recent competition to win a genuine (deactivated) Bren Gun courtesy of **Manton International Arms** of Birmingham produced the greatest response ever. Some people even sent in as many as ten entries! We wish you could all win one, but that's impossible. Still, we have another competition coming up soon in collaboration with **Regimentals**, the Islington-based military specialists, so 'watch this space'.

The first all-correct entry drawn from the postbag came from Mr Stuart Ray of Milton Keynes. Congratulations, Stuart; we'll see you in Birmingham to award your prize.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

Second prizes of copies of Ian Knight's fabulous book *Zulu* (published by **Windrow & Greene**) go to Mr K.P. Grubb of Cheltenham and Mr Piergiorgio Molinari of Monza, Italy.

Runners' up prizes of military prints suitable for framing go to Mr Larry McLean of Rochester, Michigan, USA; Mr Ron DeBruyne of Vlissingen, Holland; Mr John Maybiv of Victoria, Canada; Mr Jan Rutkiewicz of Lodz, Poland; Mr Aaron Fox of Invercargill, New Zealand; and Mr William Harmer of Grolley, Switzerland. (How's that for an international readership?)

Where those readers who did

not submit correct entries mainly got it wrong was in mixing up the FN Minimi and Stoner 63 in the second part of the competition. The correct answers, so you can check your own scoring, are as follows. **Coupon 1:** A = 8mm Hotchkiss mle 1914; B = .45 Colt M1911; C = 7.92mm ZB vz 26; D = .30 Springfield M1903; E = 9mm Radom wz 35; F = 9mm Owen Gun; **Coupon 2:** A = Mauser C96; B = Lancaster SMC; C = MP5SD3; D = Stoner 63; E = Hotchkiss mle 1909; and F = FN Minimi.

Sharpen your swords for the next competition. (Hint!)

## RORKE'S DRIFT COMPETITION

Plenty of people were also keen to win a copy of Ian Knight's other recent book, *Nothing Remains But To Fight*, which was kindly offered by Lionel Leventhal of **Greenhill Books** in London. The lucky winners are: Mr S.K. Rothwell of Reading, Berks; Mr E. Day of Basingstoke; Mr Mark Hannam of Aberdeen; Mr M.E.L. Hamill of Bournemouth; Mr Timothy Errock of Isleworth; and Mr Andrew Cole of York. Congratulations, chaps! Your books will be despatched directly from the publisher.

The correct answers to the three questions were: Nigel Green; 17 (15 killed and 2 mortally wounded); and The Buffs.

**Bruce Quarrie**

## THIRD REICH

Unlike Mr M. Jones I am not a long serving reader. In fact I only saw your magazine just over a year ago for the first time, and ordered it straightaway — and have absolutely no complaints. I look forward to receiving each issue.

Surely all history — especially military history — must be looked at objectively. It is something that has happened, whether we agree, or like it, or not. So any account recalling any of these events can be read either for: a) information; b) pleasure; c) both; or d) be ignored altogether.

Reading matter; be it books, newspapers, magazines, etc., is very much a selective process. In other words you take out what you require or need or enjoy from your particular medium at the time and leave the rest.

I most definitely am not a 'Napoleonic Man'; and please don't say, well, they weren't anything like the SS — it doesn't quite work like that. History must also be viewed somewhat relatively as well. Atrocities are still atrocities whenever they occurred in history. I think that if you were to ask the opinions of anybody whose country has ever been invaded that they certainly didn't seek the attentions that were 'afforded' upon them. For example, the British in China; South Africa and what about 'Bloody Tareton' in the American War of Independence when he slaughtered 113 Virginians by bayonet whilst they were under a flag of truce at Waxhaws in South Carolina? Anyway back to Napoleon. As I've already stated that period holds absolutely no interest for me at all. But I have either chosen to ignore these articles or glance over very casually, and I must confess that I have found one or two snippets that have been truly absorbing and it could be said enlightening.

As is quoted in the Bible: let he who is without sin cast the first stone. As a nation we do not exactly have an unblemished and exemplary record to call upon.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In the year that I have been taking your magazine I have found that there have been enough different period articles to fully satisfy any person's interest. So as a military history magazine please continue to report on all that has happened around the world thus far — including the Napoleonic Period and the Waffen-SS.

**Graham Cook, Canvey Island**

With reference to the letter by Michael Jones in the July issue of *Military Illustrated* attacking features concerned with the SS and National Socialist Germany, I have an equal distaste for material about the Israeli Army with its systematic policy of torture and genocide against the Palestinian people, particularly children. I also have no personal wish to read about the bullying and imperialistic present-day United States forces. I do not, however, consider this gives me the right to wish to suppress articles on these, or any other, armies. If *Military Illustrated* were to confine itself exclusively to the forces of countries and regimes which have never committed war crimes or atrocities it would become a very thin publication indeed. The anti-SS lobby has several times become hysterical about articles appearing in *Military Modelling*. I hope *Military Illustrated* will ignore Mr Jones and other 'politically correct' bigots.

My ideal *Military Illustrated* would contain more mediaeval and German World War II material and far fewer 19th century, World War I and Napoleonic features, but this does not mean I would wish to deprive readers who are interested in these periods of their fair share of articles.

**R. Erskine Riddell, Edinburgh**

I have been a reader of 'MI' since its first issue and find the wide range of articles both well researched and very informative. I

am writing to express my views on the recent articles about various aspects of the German army and Waffen-SS.

Whilst the atrocities of the SS were inexcusable, they are an unavoidable part of modern history. As such their uniforms, equipment and organisation form a valid part of that history.

I feel that readers should not be deprived of the right to learn about these formations and attempts at censorship by the withdrawal of some readers' subscriptions smacks of the very intolerance imposed by the Third Reich.

**M.A. Holden, Lisburn**

As a fellow subscriber since 'MI' No 1, I feel that I must write in the strongest terms regarding the letter by Mr Michael Jones in the July 1993 issue. How dare Mr Jones try to dictate to 'MI' what it can and cannot publish. This sort of politically motivated opposition to serious historical research is quite common, but the last place I expected to see it was in the pages of this magazine. Although this period is not my particular interest either, I know from associates who research Nazi material that good information is fairly thin on the ground, and bad works abound. Good material like that by Williamson, Quarrie, Davis and others are to be commended and the examination of new evidence from the New Germany and the ex-Soviet Bloc must be investigated now. I am sure that in the future there will be another flourishing of a particular area of study, as interest in historical periods tends to go in cycles. Mr Jones has also failed to comment on the huge number of 19th century American articles that have filled the pages of 'MI' recently.

Personally, I have found the recent issues of 'MI' fairly dull as they have not always covered my personal interests, that is the

British Army's uniforms, equipment, etc. However, being over 21 and of a mature, adult point of view, I accept that there are others who read the magazine that find these articles essential for their own subjects.

**Robert Ball, Bradford**

The recent issues of 'MI' contain nothing inappropriate for a journal such as yours. The German armed forces of the period, including the Waffen-SS, are a legitimate area of study. To somehow draw a veil over the achievement and experience of the German soldier seems to me pointless in the extreme. I look forward to many more articles on related topics.

**Wayne Radcliffe, Cleveland**

I read with interest and, admittedly, disbelief the letter from Mr Michael Jones in the July edition of *Military Illustrated*. While I respect his personal views, I cannot let such an outrageously narrow-minded opinion pass without comment. Mr Jones says that, because the magazine has recently featured so many articles on Nazi Germany, he no longer wishes to subscribe, such is his distaste for the subject. He makes particular reference to the SS. I am not for one moment suggesting that he should not be allowed to cancel his subscription if he does not like the magazine; after all, 'the customer is always right'. But since he has chosen to air his opinions, he must, I feel, allow me to air mine.

To begin with, the Wehrmacht, and the Waffen-SS in particular, were, man for man, arguably the best soldiers the world has ever seen. They held out against overwhelming odds for years, disadvantaged by a truly independent Supreme Commander. As A.J.P. Taylor said, 'a tipster who predicted with only Hitler's level of accuracy would not have done well for his clients'. I assume that Mr Jones' distaste is because of the atrocities with which the Wehrmacht and the SS were associated. I hope and pray that Mr Jones understands



the clear distinction between the Waffen-SS, who fought so well, and the Allgemeine-SS who, among other things, staffed the concentration camps.

I have little doubt that arguments relating to Malmedy and other such incidents will be dutifully trotted out. However, what amazes me is the capacity that people who believe the Waffen-SS were evil, etc., etc., have for believing that the Allied armies were not guilty of such incidents. One has only to look at, say, the massacre of Polish officers in the forest of Katyn to see that this is clearly not so. Going back in time a little, may we examine Amritsar: hundreds of innocent Indian civilians were killed by British troops in the holy city of Amritsar in 1929; the British didn't even need a war! I make no judgements over the morality of such events; that is not my job. While it is undeniable that certain units of the Waffen-SS and the Wehrmacht in general were guilty of war crimes, and perhaps even more so than other armies, this should not detract from their undeniably impressive record in battle. I make no excuses for them; some of the crimes committed were truly horrendous. But those responsible have largely been brought to justice, and the fact that a soldier kills a civilian without reason does not make him any worse a soldier. The Waffen-SS is a valid historical subject, and those who wish to study it should be allowed to do so without being harassed by narrow-minded bigots.

I would make one further point. If we suppress study of such sensitive and controversial subjects as the Waffen-SS, we run the risk of encouraging their glorification. By openly admitting their faults, but seeking to show their military merits, aside from their political shortcomings, we alleviate this risk. This is the supposedly-civilized twentieth century, not the Dark Ages.

**Eliot Wilson, Sunderland**

As a reader whose main interests are in 17th and 18th century military history, I view the rather disproportionate number of articles on Nazi artifacts with a certain detachment. What does seem strange about the widespread interest shown in these things is the fleeting nature of the organisations themselves. By any standard the Waffen-SS must soon be relegated to a footnote in military history. Having existed for only some seven years, fought in one war, and having every member either killed or captured, hardly seems to promote any great status. Add to this that the Waffen-SS was a mish-mash of Dutch, Hungarians, German, Croat and goodness knows what units, that whatever their apologists say they will be perpetually remembered for murder and rape rather than any military skill; and, of course; they lost the only war they fought in.

Any British regiment has a

longer, more honourable, history than the SS, as a visit to any of our regimental museums will testify. But, I'm not too put out about your articles. The collection of Nazi insignia is very much at the 'train spotting' end of military history, the proliferation of so many 'official' fakes indicates that they are more interested in form than reality! It was nice, though, for you to print the article about the successes of the Red Army in 1945, you obviously do make an effort not to be one-sided. I would assume that you can only print what you are offered, so ultimately it is up to people to produce information on other subjects. Unlike Mr Jones, I am not going to cancel my subscription, you print a lot I find very interesting (more from Rene Chartrand, please!).

**Andrew Dalziel, Maidstone**

In response to your invitation to comment upon the issue raised by Michael Jones' letter about the number of articles on Nazi topics in *Military Illustrated*, I should like to fully support his comments. I have been very disappointed by the number of articles on Nazi subjects included in your otherwise very interesting magazine.

I was particularly affronted by the article on Theodore Eike which suggested that this Nazi ex-concentration camp commandant (to mention just one of the attributes described in Roy Bryant's article) did not deserve the description 'Butcher'. This suggestion and the tone of the article seemed to attempt to portray a perspective which contributes to the 'apologist' and 'revisionist' approach to history attempted by authors such as David Irving.

In many areas of military interest I see a growing interest in Nazi matters; military modelling, militaria collecting and literature. I can only conclude that those who take such an interest in these things also actively or passively share some or all of the values which the Nazis represented.

I will continue to buy your magazine but only those editions which contain no articles which promote an interest in Nazi matters.

**Martin Gajos, York**

While I find the detail of any military uniform interesting, like Michael Jones, I find that in the case of the Third Reich a little goes a long way. However, my chief reservation concerns the respectful, indeed deferential tone of Gordon Williamson's accompanying articles. In the technical sense of the term, these may have been good soldiers; but they fought in an evil cause, and there is nothing admirable about them.

**Lt-Colonel D.J.S. Murray, Lauder**

WE HAVE received several more letters on this subject since closing for press which we shall be publishing next month. **Ed.**

## THE AUCTION SCENE

COLLECTORS' INTEREST in World War I shows no sign of abating and material relative to that terrible blood-bath continues to sell well. This seems to apply even if the material is not contemporary as was shown when a modern oil painting entitled 'Into the Sun' and showing an event in the famous tank battle at Cambrai in November 1917 realised £250 in the June Kent sale. A bomb of the type used by the Royal Flying Corps and dated 1918 mounted on a simple display stand sold for £301. A rather nice leather scabbard, designed for the bolt-action carbine, as issued to the British Army cavalry during the early part of this century, went up to a rather surprising £225.

Bayonets continued to sell well at reasonable prices but, as with all types of antiques, rarity was to ensure that one Japanese Arisaka bayonet fetched £300 whilst several other Arisakas sold at around £30 each. The expensive one complete with scabbard was a Japanese Marine Troop pattern issue bayonet in very good condition that made it ten times more expensive than the standard issue.

*A rare set of Slade Wallace Infantry equipment as carried during the Zulu War — the belt with buckle of 2nd Royal Cheshire Regiment, together with circular, wool covered water bottle; £425. (All from the Kent Sale on 11 June 1993, courtesy Kent Sales.)*

Third Reich edged weapons sold around their usual prices although a rather nice SA dagger that retained on its blade some of the Ernst Röhm's inscription (which was normally removed after that man's execution) went for £410. A good example of a German Naval officer's dirk did well selling at £230.

Although there were still one or two sales to be held in late June and July, as summer draws on the sale season begins to wind down and the first general assessment of the past season can be made. On the whole it has been an encouraging period and sufficiently so as to generate a faintly optimistic attitude among the dealers. There is a feeling that things are, once again, beginning to move with the market generally a little more lively. The position is still a very long way from returning to the happy days of the '80s when trade was good with material moving very well. Dealers are still experiencing difficulty in finding good, new, saleable material. One reason is that many collectors are reluctant to sell as the market is rather stagnant and they wait hopefully for things to improve and prices to rise. However, as the flow of new material declines there is less new stuff available to encourage fresh buyers. Fewer buyers and mediocre prices merely strengthen this reluctance to sell and a somewhat closed loop is created.

As far as the sales are concerned results have generally been good







**Left to right:** Imperial German Pickelhaube of an NCO in the Bavarian State Army — the chin scales possibly associated; £390. Parade Pickelhaube of an army officer of the Grand Duchy of Baden; £375. Dress Pickelhaube of an officer of the army of Saxony; £590.

with one or two surprises. Last month's column stressed how some of these surprises were due to provenance and competition, two factors that are often very difficult to assess when considering the probable price that an object might reach in a sale. To these factors can be added yet another vital factor — knowledge.

The old cliché that knowledge is power is very true in the auction business. When a lot in a sale greatly exceeds the estimated price one of the first reactions of the cataloguers is to ask, what does the buyer know that we don't? People who catalogue for the auction houses are usually working to a deadline which is the latest date that material must be with the printer in order to print the catalogue and distribute it in good time for the sale. In addition there is always plenty of administration work, queries to answer and meetings to attend. All these tasks take up time which means that the amount of time given to the cataloguing of most objects is shorter than they would wish. This being so there is always the possibility, albeit a small one, that some detail, feature or unusual characteristic may well be missed and something of importance may slip through unnoticed.

Familiarity can lead to carelessness and one can look at hundreds of items and see only the obvious. If there is some pressure it is terribly easy to miss the subtle difference that may mark out one object as being unusual and consequently rarer and almost certainly more

valuable. The expert will take no chances and scrutinise every piece very closely, looking for any feature that may enhance the object's value. Crests and coats-of-arms are always worth checking for if they can be identified up goes the value and once identified a quick reference to the Dictionary of National Biography, the Army lists or similar directories may supply a provenance that will increase the value many times. This sounds easy but in practice it takes time, something that is not always available. This is one very good reason for acquiring the sale catalogue as soon as it is available so gaining a little extra time to check such details. Numbers, marks and names, whether of makers or owners, should always be checked as well as minor variations from the standard pattern for similar objects.

Another problem with knowledge is that there is no easy way to acquire it and like experience it comes only with time and effort. Books are obviously vital sources of information but the best books in the world cannot give the all-round details and 'feel' that comes from handling items. Visits to auction rooms and fairs are one way to acquire such expertise for they offer a wonderful opportunity to examine a wide variety of objects. In the case of the auction rooms it is a very worthwhile exercise to compare the catalogue description with the object. This will permit an assessment of the accuracy and extent of the cataloguing and that means that in future the reliability of the catalogue is easier to judge.

It must be said that despite all the helpful advice offered, all the expertise, all the experience and with the best will in the world there will always be the lot that slips through without being seen for what it is. In such cases the purchaser will be delighted and the vendor will probably never know. Another example of an ill wind!

**Frederick Wilkinson**

*A fine group of World War II medals awarded to Major B. Jackson, DFC, GPR a glider pilot who served in many of the European campaigns and was awarded the DFC for his part in the crossing of the Rhine. He was also awarded the US Silver Star for his actions at Arnhem; £1,050.*



## THE AGE OF LACE

THE THREE Musketeers of fiction had a basis in fact, and even D'Artagnan was a real person. Here we look at the organisation and uniforms of the two real mounted Musketeer companies during the 17th and 18th centuries.

### Garde du dehors du Louvre: Mousquetaires de la Garde (The Musketeers)

OF ALL THE units of the old royal guard, the Musketeers of the Guard are certainly the best known and the best loved by the general public. This owes its origins to the shadowy Byzantine politics and plots in the European courts of the 1630s, in which Cardinal Richelieu, Louis XIII's prime minister, was a master player. During the 19th century, these events inspired French novelist Alexandre Dumas to write *Les trois mousquetaires* — The Three Musketeers, one of the best-loved all-time classics of historical fiction, translated into many languages. This novel was so popular that a sequel,

*Drummer of the 1st Company of Musketeers in 1730, after Parrocel. Note the absence of lace on the coat and the white horse. (Watercolour by Eugène Liliépvre, courtesy of the artist.)*

*Vingt ans après* (Twenty years later) was eventually published and also became a worldwide best-seller.

The popularity of The Three Musketeers was such that they, and their leader D'Artagnan, were produced on the stage, and, almost as soon as cinema became part of the entertainment industry, as feature films. As a result, the public started to see the King's Guard Musketeers with their cassocks with crosses swashbuckling across the screens against their arch-enemies, the Guards of Cardinal Richelieu. Thanks to new versions in technicolour, the cassocks of the good guys were revealed to be blue with white crosses, and those of the bad guys crimson-red with white crosses, when the costume designer bothered to research the costume. This is how must of us recall the musketeers. As children they inspired many of us to wage wooden sword fights and prompted attempts at producing cassocks and plumed hats. For some, a kindling of interest which would lead to military





# The Royal Guards of France 1661-1763

Musketeers of the Guard during the 1660s, wearing their familiar blue cassocks with white crosses. In principle, only the cassock

RENÉ CHARTRAND

was 'uniform' at this time, but in practice it appears that the

musketeers tended to have white and crimson or red hat

plumes and wear red clothing. (Plate by Eugène Lilièpvre, reproduced by permission of Le Cimeter.)







FRANCE - 1676  
Première Compagnie des MOUSQUETAIRES

Officer and trooper of the 1st Company of Musketeers in 1676. The blue cassock has become an ample cloak and its red lining is turned back over the upper arms and shoulders. Gold lace and buttons are visible and the cross appears to be gold with gold flames (but this could be due to ageing paint). Gold laced hat with red and white plumes. Housings are shown blue edged with gold lace and a gold tassel at the back corner. (Ink drawing by Eugène Lilièvre after a mural painting in the Invalides, courtesy of the artist.)

history had been lit.

#### The historic musketeers

The King's Musketeer really did exist and formed an important part of the guards outside the Louvre. (Incidentally, D'Artagnan, one of the heroes of Dumas' Three Musketeers, was a real person. He was Captain of the 1st Company

from 1667 until killed at the siege of Maestricht in 1673.) While the musketeers are mostly remembered as cavalry companies, they were also to serve on foot as required and each company even had an infantry colour as well as cavalry standards.

A guard unit of mounted musketeers had been raised in 1622 by Louis XIII. It was this unit that was always picking fights with the Cardinal's guards when not fighting the enemy, but it was disbanded in 1646. This first company, consisting of 155 officers and men, was re-raised in 1657 and the second company in 1665. From the 1660s, each company had about 320 officers and men and they were present in a great many actions. They were known respectively as the grey and the black musketeers due to the colour of the horses of each company.

From 1622 and again from

1657, the Musketeers of the Guard wore the celebrated blue cassock with the white crosses at the front and back and at the sides. The cassock was lined with red and edged with silver lace. Initially, the crosses were plain white with a long red flame at each angle. By about 1660, the tips and angles of the white crosses each had a gold lily. The formation of a second company in 1665 brought further changes and instead of lilies at the angles of the cross, there were three small red flames. Short at first, the cassocks became gradually longer during the later 1660s and 1670s, looking more like cloaks which often got in the way.

In about 1685, Louis XIV decided to solve the problem and replaced the bulky cassocks by a blue sleeveless coat (called a *soubreveste*). This garment would be slipped over the head, somewhat like a modern

'poncho', and fastened at the waist by a blue and silver belt. The *soubreveste* was lined with red and edged with two silver laces at each side. It had the company's distinctive crosses on the breast and at the back, the white crosses now edged with narrow silver lace. Later on, possibly as late as 1720, the 2nd Company replaced the red flames with five golden yellow (*aurora*) flames at the angles.

Red coats appear to have always been favoured by the Musketeers. However, during the 1660s, because of the king's wish for ceremonies, they could also be found in buff coats (to which some rich musketeers added diamonds on the sleeves) or wearing suits of black velvet. When uniforms were adopted from 1673, all-red coats were taken into wear by both companies, laced with gold for the 1st Company, and gold and silver mixed for the 2nd. According to an account of May 1681 describing a drill display by the 1st Company for an embassy from Russia, the company's gold lace was set 'edging the cuffs, and several other places'. The distinctive lacing also edged their hats and buff bandoliers of both companies. In about 1715, the lace of the 2nd Company was changed to silver only, the 1st Company keeping its gold lace.

The waistcoat, breeches and stockings were red, the waistcoat being edged with the respective company's lace. Early on, hat plumes were generally white with some crimson and ribbon colour could vary. At a review in 1679, they wore white hat plumes and blue ribbons. In 1688, the 2nd Company had green ribbons. Ribbons went out of style in the later 1690s but white plumes continued to garnish the hats. The musketeers had stiff, heavy black cavalry boots until 1683 when the king specified softer, lighter boots with spurs fixed in. For service on foot, they wore shoes. Housings were red, edged with lace. Their arms consisted of swords and pistols, and of course, 'muskets'; first matchlock muskets replaced probably during the 1660s by flintlock carbines.

This all-red uniform with the *soubreveste* remained the dress of both companies for the rest of the period under study, from 1715 to 1763, with the usual changes due to fashion.

Senior officers wore the all-red coat trimmed with company lace but did not wear the *soubreveste*. The Brigadiers (in theory NCOs but actually junior officers) had the same uniform



as the men but with laced buttonholes and pocket flaps. Brigadiers wore the *soubreveste* which was edged with about five silver laces and the royal cypher was embroidered in gold on the skirt. The housings of the officers were similar to those of the men, red edged with company lace.

The Musketeers had drummers, for service on foot, as

they were considered a mounted infantry type of corps. In practice, the drummers were mounted as well. Early on, they wore the blue cassock with the white crosses and blue clothing instead of red. Once uniforms were adopted, they wore the red coat as the other men, but without lace. Their *soubreveste* were the same colours as the men's but had false sleeves and

wings and were practically covered with broad silver lace. The crosses were put upon the silver lace on the chest and back of the *soubreveste*. Their skirts, unlike those of the officers and men, had elaborately laced pockets. The drums were smaller than in the infantry and were blue with the king's arms painted in front. The drum collars were blue edged with sil-

ver. When mounted, the housings were similar to those of the men of their respective companies but they were mounted on white horses. **MI**

*Trumpeter and drummer of the musketeers, circa 1663. (Ink drawing by Eugène Liliépvre after an engraving by Della Bella, courtesy of the artist.)*







**Above:**  
Back view of a Sub-Brigadier of the 1st Company, Musketeers of the Guard, circa 1724. Brigadiers had laced buttonholes. Sketch by Lucien Rousselot after original by Delâtre. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University.)

**Above right:**  
Brigadier of the 1st Company, Musketeers of the Guard, circa 1724. Sketch by Lucien Rousselot after original by Delâtre. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University.)

**Right:**  
Musketeers during the 1680s. At left, a musketeer of the 1st Company, circa 1680, wearing the bulky cape shortly before the adoption of the soubreveste. At right, a musketeer of the 2nd Company in 1688, according to a drawing by Bonnard, wearing the new soubreveste, possibly the first model issued edged all around with a single silver lace. A second lace was added, probably during the 1690s. Plate by Marbot. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University.)





# The Ross Rifle Scandal

CYRIL BRACEGIRDLE

WHEN THE Canadian Army sailed to war in 1914, it was equipped with a rifle totally unsuited for the battlefield. This article examines why and what the defects of the Ross Rifle were.

PLAYING WITH firearms can be dangerous, as Charles Henry Augustus Frederick Lockhart Ross found out when he invented what came to be known as the Ross rifle, and caused a major political and military scandal that had repercussions on the battlefields of WWI.

A Scottish laird of ancient descent, the 9th Baronet of Balnagown, Charles Henry was born in 1872 and grew up to be the owner of 350,000 acres of Scotland on which lived more than 2,000 tenants. He took to hunting as a boy, like all of his class, and developed an early fascination for firearms. In his case, however, the fascination resided in the technical aspects and not merely in hunting and shooting.

At Eton he decided that his life's work was to be that of a designer of rifles, and convinced himself that he could improve on any existing model. After college he took an engineering course at Cambridge and there, in 1893, took out his first patent for a rifle, although little is known of this particular item and it was never put into manufacture.

In 1897 he produced a second design which was made and placed on sale by London gunmaker Charles Lancaster. The Model 1897 Magazine Sporting Rifle was a close copy of the straight-pull Austrian Manlicher, a gun which Ross appears to have admired and to have studied closely.

The Model 1897 had a bolt-in type of sleeve assembly in which the bolt handle is integral with the sleeve. The firing pin was struck by a hinged hammer and a small coiled spring held the pin in position for striking. Ribs on either side of the sleeve ensured that the latter could not turn, while helical bolted ribs in opposition traced grooves on the inside of the sleeve, allowing the bolt to rotate, the lugs being locked in the shoulder wells as the handle slid to closed position. The magazine contained five cartridges.

Not long after Lancaster

began selling this gun, arrangements were made for it to be manufactured under licence in America by Joseph A Bennett of Hartford, Connecticut. Production continued on both sides of the Atlantic for some time and sales were reasonably good. In 1900 Ross introduced a further design called the Model 1900 Sporter. In this version the hammer was abandoned in favour of a coiled spring in the hollowed-out area of the bolt to activate the firing pin. Otherwise the Model 1900 was almost a twin to the 1890 Austrian Manlicher. Ross did not seem to be very strong on originality.

In 1903 he produced a further version called the Model 1903 and this one seems to have achieved some popularity with the kind of men who in those days went to Africa to slaughter big game. The sale of these rifles earned Ross some money which he did not need, but none of the fame that he *did* need.

Seeking wider fields to conquer, he made the Canadian government aware of the existence of the Laird of Balnagown by approaching Sir Frederick Borden, Minister of Militia, with a plan to build a factory to make the Model 1900 for the Canadian Army. Previously Canada had obtained all its military requirements from Britain, but the Boer War had reduced supplies. Ross claimed that the 1900 was being used very effectively in South Africa.

Borden agreed to a trial, and the Ross was fired in a test with

a Lee Enfield Mark 1. The Ross did not stand the comparison very well. After 1,300 rounds had been fired by the Lee Enfield, functioning perfectly, the Ross proved susceptible to jamming. The Laird explained this away by saying that the British ammunition being used was not as good a quality as the Austrian and American cartridges that his rifle normally used. 'We shall cure the jamming', he said plausibly, 'by regulating the chamber and breeching up the lugs'.

That test should have been a warning of the disasters to come, especially as British ammunition was then the best in the world so Ross's excuse ought to have carried little weight, but the man had great charm and persuasive powers, and Borden was under pressure to find a home-made Canadian rifle quickly. In 1902 Ross signed a contract to make 12,000 rifles during 1903 and more later. He invested half a million pounds in a factory near the Plains of Abraham in Quebec.

The Liberal Party was in power in Ottawa at that time, and the Conservative opposition was soon pointing out that Ross was assembling his rifles from parts supplied by American companies, although he had contracted to produce an all-Canadian weapon. But Ross knew how to use the prestige of his ancient title. General Sam Hughes was one who supported him, and Ross needed allies, because the first rifle did not come off the assembly line until 1905. As usual, Ross blamed the delay on others.

The first 1,000 were supplied to the North-West Mounties — which was their bad luck! Bolts fell out when the butt was struck on the ground during parades. Springs and other components had a nasty habit of breaking at

inconvenient moments. In 1906 a Sergeant-Major lost an eye when an entire bolt assembly blasted back into his face. The Mounties withdrew their entire stock. An officer commented, 'It's a good thing we don't have a war to fight!'

During the next two years there were to be scores of modifications to the Ross, and by 1908 the rifle was being issued to the Canadian Army in the teeth of much criticism, and despite the death of a soldier when the breech of a Mark 2 burst.

The Palma Nova Match of 1911 was won by the American team, the Ross performing dismally. A Canadian newspaper commented, 'We have made a rifle almost impractical for war'.

In the same year the Conservative Party came to power in Canada and Sam Hughes became Minister of Militia. With his friend behind him, Ross was at that moment safer than ever. The Mark 2 with its almost uncountable imperfections was being issued throughout the army, and in Europe the great carnage of WWI was approaching.

In 1912 an English big game hunter, George Gray, fired five shots from a Mark 2 at a charging African lion. As they hit their target the bullets fractured into small fragments, serving only to enrage the lion which reached Gray and mauled him to death.

In 1914 the Canadian Army went into the trenches with the Ross Mark 2. Soon, Canadian newspapers were printing stories complaining that 'our boys' were facing an enemy with rifles that jammed, bolts that froze in winter, receiver wells that became choked with mud. Ross was never available to answer questions, invariably travelling in America or visiting his Scottish estates. Once he was reported as saying that he

*Ross Rifle Marks II & III.*





was 'bloody well not going to play nursemaid to the Canadian army'.

Sam Hughes defended his friend, protesting that he knew of Canadian soldiers so fond of their Ross that they had to 'sleep on it lest the English steal it!'

This was a patent untruth, since official investigation revealed that the belt design was ill-suited to the muddy conditions of trench warfare, and that the extraction mechanism was too weak given cartridges of inferior quality — a result of wartime economies. Another problem was that the solid locking lugs soon damaged the bolt stop. Ross attempted to remedy this on the Mark 3, replacing the lugs by a type of triple-thread interrupted screw mechanism. This was too little, too late. Sam Hughes was sacked and Ross, his protector gone, was lost. The government took over his factory to manufacture Lee-Enfields.

The astonishing fact is that some 419,000 Ross Rifles had been manufactured between 1903 and 1915, of which some 67,000 Mark 3s were actually delivered to the British Army; some of these survived to be issued to the Home Guard in the Second World War. The only successful version was the Mark 3 sniper rifle, fitted with a Warner and Swasey telescopic sight (see *MI/52*). Because it did not come in for such rough and constant handling, it was not so easily damaged, and it was certainly more accurate than the Lee-Enfield. It is generally regarded as the most accurate sniper rifle in the Great War and, with 399 still in Canadian Ordnance stores in 1937, it served in the same role during World War II. Many present-day marksmen still use it in preference to anything else.

Charles Lockhart Ross was still among the world's richest men. He eventually went to live in St Petersburg, Florida, where, years later, he was a familiar sight shambling down the main street in an empire builder's pith helmet and pyjamas. He died in 1942, lonely and discredited by the firearms business in which he had so hoped for fame. **MI**

#### **Specification: Rifle, Ross Mark 3**

Calibre 303in (7.7mm)  
Weight unloaded 9lb 14oz (4.48kg)  
Length overall 50.56in (128.5cm)  
Barrel length 30.15in (76.5cm)  
Magazine 5-round box  
Muzzle velocity 2,600fps (792m/s)

## **COLONIAL WARFARE**

# **The Scinde Campaign, 1843**

CARLTON WRIGLEY

UNTIL AFTER THE end of the Indian Mutiny in 1858, the large tracts of the Indian sub-continent, often considered to be British Crown possessions, were, in fact, controlled by the Honourable East India Company, either by direct rule or through compliant Indian native rulers. At the date of the Company's first charter in 1600, it was a purely trading enterprise but, with the passage of years, it became the major commercial and political power in India. But, as its power and influence increased, the British Parliament had exerted some political control over the Company by means of the Charter Acts of 1813 and 1833.

In order to be able to defend its territories and, when expedient, to expand its influence, the Company had raised a progressively larger standing army. This consisted largely of native regiments, recruited from the indigenous population, but with mainly British officers. Each of the three Presidencies — Madras, Bengal and Bombay — also recruited one or two European regiments, often from ex-servicemen who had remained in India after completing their service with the Colours. To augment their own recruited forces, infantry and cavalry, the Company had made a practice, from 1757, of offering to 'loan' from the War Office, British cavalry and infantry units for service in India. Royal Artillery units only saw service in India after the commencement of the Mutiny. The first British regiment to serve in India was the 39th (Dorsetshire) Regiment, whose motto became 'Primus in Indis'.

Prior to 1830, the Honourable East India Company had shown little interest in the territory known as the Scinde, since it was considered to have neither commercial nor strategic value. The territory was a loose federation of states, of which the principal ones were Hyderabad, Khaipur and Mirpur, each state having its own Amir. The lower reaches of the River Indus ran through the Scinde to the sea, and in 1832 the value of the river as an inland waterway for com-

merce was realised. At about the same time, the Indian Administration realised that some effort would have to be made to curtail the increasing power and influence in the Scinde of the Sikh leader, Ranjit Singh. To protect the commerce route and to establish some political influence over the Scinde, the East India Company negotiated a treaty with the Amirs which allowed a British Resident to be installed in Hyderabad. The first Resident was Colonel

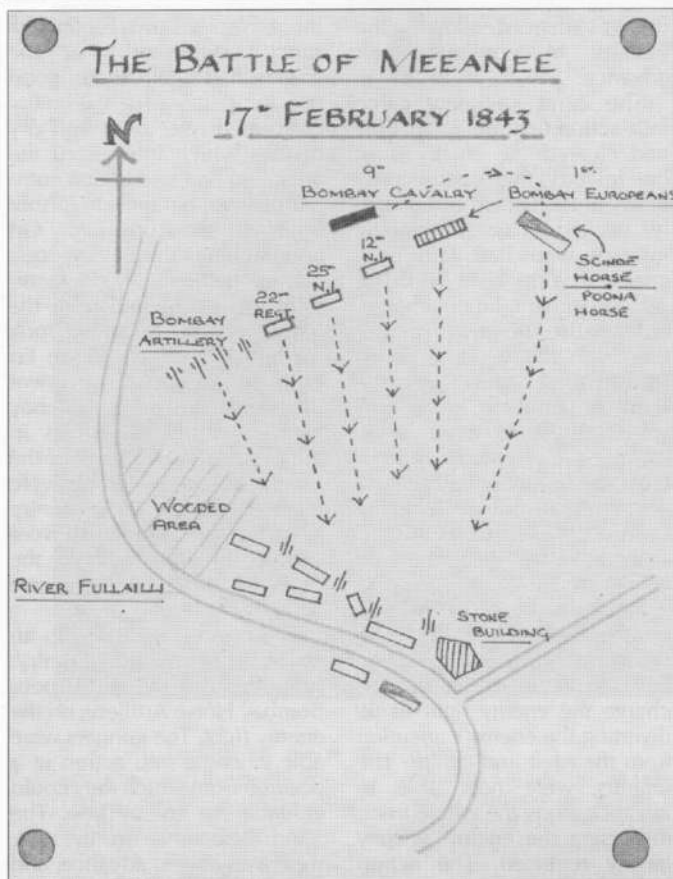
Pottinger.

During the war with Afghanistan (1839-1842), Ranjit Singh had refused to allow British and Company troops to cross Sikh territory en route to Afghanistan. As an alternative, the Scinde, with easy access to the Bolan Pass into Afghanistan, was extensively used. Although the Amirs were not enthusiastic about this, they did not actively interfere with the traffic, a circumstance possibly due to the diplomatic skills of James



*Private, Batalion Company, the 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment of Foot.*





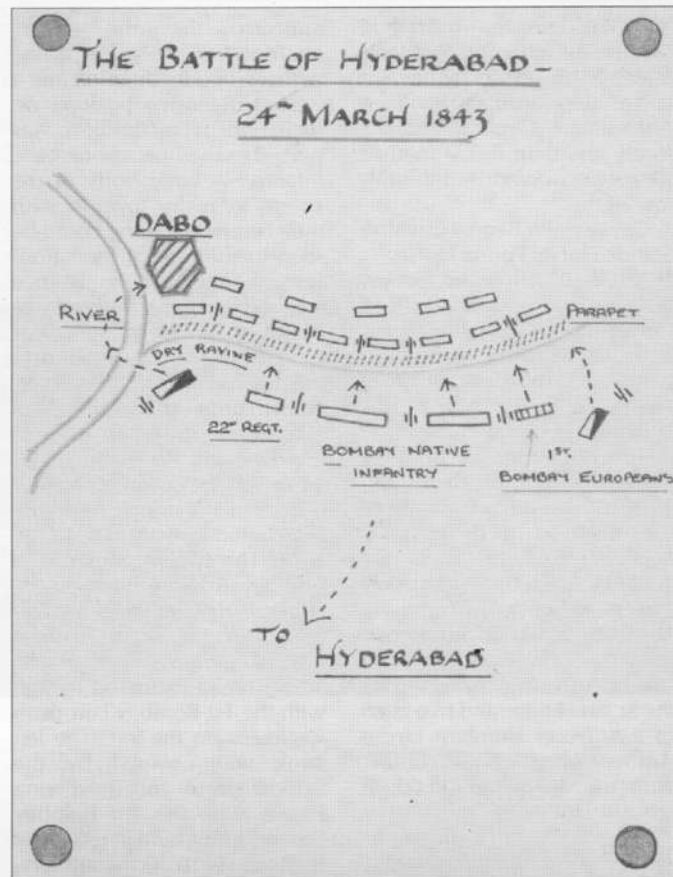
Outram, who had become the British Resident in Hyderabad in 1839. Towards the end of the Afghan War, the Government in India decided to consolidate control over what was now considered to be a strategically important area and, as a result, a revised treaty was presented to the Amirs for their agreement. This new treaty effectively removed their independence, threatening them with annexation if '... it appeared recquiescent, however remotely, for the safety and integrity of the AngloIndian Empire or frontier'. The treaty was accepted by the Amirs.

Lord Ellenborough, shortly after his appointment as Governor-General in 1842, decided that, as a result of the growing importance of the port of Karachi, that port, the territory of Sukkur and the island of Bukkur should come directly under Company control. Major-General Sir Charles Napier was appointed to the command of the British and Company troops in the Scinde in July 1842 and, after a speedy assessment of the situation, he advised the Governor-General that, because of minor infringements of the conditions of the 1839 treaty by the Amirs, Karachi, Sukkur, Bukkur and also Sabzalot could justifiably be annexed. Lord Ellenborough promptly accepted the advice, and the relevant treaties of annexation were sent to Napier

in November, for signature by the Amirs. Until December, the Amirs were trying to negotiate what in fact was not negotiable, and on 8 December, Napier unilaterally annexed the named territories.

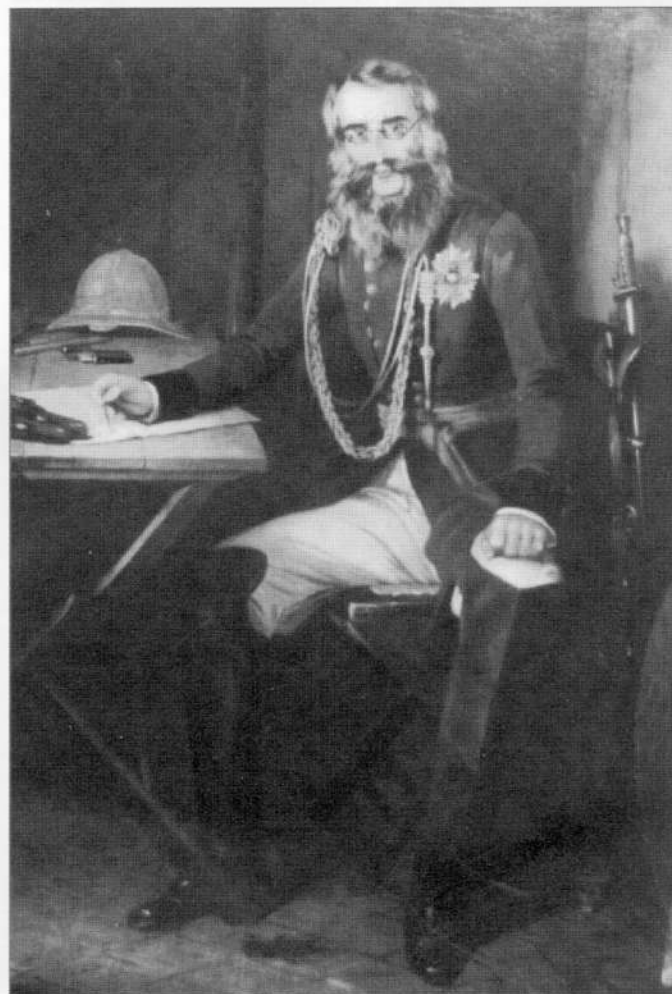
As early as October 1842, Major Outram had advised General Napier that the Amirs were preparing to take military action to prevent any further erosion of their sovereignty. At this time, General Napier's force did not exceed 8,000 men, but he nonetheless determined to make a demonstration against the Amirs. With 350 men of the 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment, who were mounted on camels, 200 men of the Scinde Horse and a section of the Bombay Horse Artillery with two howitzers, Napier marched 80 miles across the barren desert to the fort at Imamgarh, where information had suggested that the Amirs were meeting. On arrival, it was found that the Amirs had departed, but the fort was captured and destroyed on 12 January, after which Napier returned to his main camp.

Major Outram continued discussions with the Amirs throughout January in an effort to secure a peaceful solution, but without any success, and on 12 February 1843, a mob besieged him and his small escort in the Residency at Hyderabad. He was able to withdraw from the Residency by river and joined General



Napier on 16 February. It was now evident that military action would be necessary to implement the declaration of annexation.

*Detail from a painting of General Sir Charles Napier at the time of the Scinde campaign.*





By this time the Amirs had collected a large force of their infantry, supported by cavalry and artillery, around the village of Meeanee. General Napier's force, less than 8,000 men fit for service, comprised the following.

Cavalry: 9th Bengal Cavalry; Scinde Horse; Poona Horse.

Artillery: 1st and 2nd Troops, Bombay Horse Artillery; 2nd Company, 1st Battalion Bombay Foot Artillery; 3rd Company, 3rd Battalion Bombay Foot Artillery.

Infantry: 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment of Foot; 1st Bombay European Regiment; 12th and 25th Bombay Native Infantry.

Engineers: 2nd Madras Sappers and Miners.

General Napier began operations at dawn on 17 February, when he marched his troops towards Meeanee. The advance guard, consisting of the Scinde Horse and two guns of 1st Troop Bombay Horse Artillery, had visual contact with the enemy at 08.00. It

appeared that the enemy infantry was massed in a line with a wood on their left and a walled defensive position on their right. Their artillery was placed in the line amongst the infantry. A large body of the enemy's cavalry, together with their reserve infantry, could be seen to the rear of their front line. A later reconnaissance established that a further large body of enemy infantry was hidden in a fold of ground to the left centre of their front. Napier ordered an immediate attack along the whole front.

Advancing to within 300 yards of the enemy, Napier deployed his troops into line, in echelon formation from the right. The twelve guns of the Bombay Artillery were on the extreme right of the line, followed in succession by the 22nd Regiment, the 25th and 12th Bombay Native Infantry, with the 1st Bombay European Regiment on the left. The left flank was covered by the Scinde Horse and the Poona Horse, with the 9th Bombay Cavalry being held in reserve at the rear. At 10:30 the artillery, covered by infantry skirmishers, rode forward from their position on the right, and commenced counter-battery fire on the enemy guns which had been causing casualties amongst the advancing infantry. The enemy artillery

fire was silenced, allowing the infantry to continue their advance.

The 22nd Regiment came into action first and, after they had cleared the enemy front line infantry, they encountered heavy musket fire from a densely packed mass of enemy infantry who had lain concealed in a dry river bed. The 22nd Regiment did not charge, but they fired volleys of musket fire into the enemy ranks. Meanwhile, four of the Bombay Artillery field guns were brought into action overlooking the river bed, and the combined artillery and musket fire rapidly thinned out the enemy, allowing the 22nd Regiment to resume their advance.

Having observed the hold-up on the right, General Napier ordered the Scinde Horse and the 9th Bengal Cavalry to charge the enemy right flank, diverting the enemy's attention from their left and centre. The infantry were now able to advance along the whole front, dispersing the enemy as they hastily retreated. The action lasted four hours and the Anglo-Indian casualties amounted to 64 dead and 194 wounded. Enemy casualties were estimated at around 2,000 dead.

Immediately after their defeat, the Amirs sent emissaries to General Napier's camp to request surrender terms. Napier was not prepared to negotiate and would only accept unconditional surrender. All the Amirs, except the Amir of Mirpur, accepted the unconditional surrender and, on 19 February, the Anglo-Indian troops entered Hyderabad. After fleeing from the battlefield at Meeanee, the Amir of Mirpur began to collect a further force of troops and tribesmen to oppose the occupation, and towards the end of March he was observed to be heading towards Hyderabad with an army of around 25,000 men.

General Napier had earlier requested some reinforcements to counter any continuing hostilities, and these reinforcements arrived on 23rd March. They consisted of the 3rd Bengal Cavalry; 2nd Company Bengal Foot Artillery; and 8th and 21st Bombay Native Infantry.

On 24 March, General Napier, with his augmented force, marched from Hyderabad, acting on information received that the enemy way in considerable force around the village of Dabo and preparing a defensive position

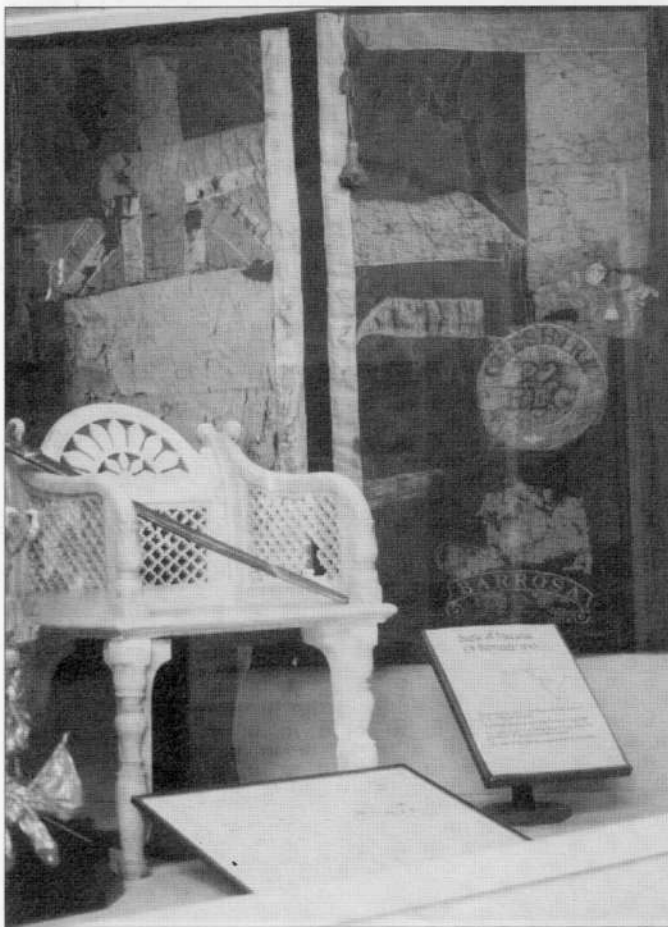
there. Napier's own reconnaissance established that the enemy had again made good use for defence of the many concealed river beds and dry ravines which intersected the area, and had also built a number of stone parapets to further improve the position. On approaching these defences, Napier deployed his infantry into line, echeloned from the left. The 22nd Regiment took the left of the line and the 1st Bombay European Regiment the right, with the Bombay Native Infantry Regiments in the centre. The batteries of the Bombay Foot Artillery were located between the infantry battalions and the flanks were covered by the cavalry by the cavalry and the Bombay Horse Artillery batteries.

The assault opened with an attack by the Bengal Cavalry, supported by the 1st Troop, Bombay Horse Artillery, on the enemy right. The gunners were able to come into action in a position from which they could enfilade the enemy line. The 22nd Regiment, on the left, were thus able to advance, and charging the opposing infantry, they broke through the defences, pursuing the enemy on the village of Dabo, which they captured. Meanwhile on the right, a similar cavalry attack forced the enemy to withdraw in disorder, followed up by the infantry. General Napier himself led the pursuit, but the Amir of Mirpur again succeeded in escaping. Casualties amongst Napier's force were 270 killed and wounded. As at Meeanee, the 22nd Regiment bore the brunt of the fighting and the casualties.

To complete the operation, General Napier moved his troops to Mirpur on 25 March. The town surrendered the next day without offering any resistance, but the elusive Amir succeeded in making good his escape. The occupation of the annexed territories was now completed, although the Amir of Mirpur did continue a guerilla war against the occupying troops, but he eventually was obliged to leave the Scinde in June, when all resistance ended.

The campaign was considered by the Governor-General to have been a total success, the East India Company now had complete control over the estuary and lower reaches of the River Indus, together with control of the north-west coastal area. General Napier himself, however, referred to the conquest of the Scinde as

*The Colours of the 22nd Regiment carried during the Scinde campaign. The chair in the foreground is from one of the palaces of the Amirs. All photos by Gordon Cadman of exhibits in the Cheshire Military Museum, The Castle, Chester, by kind permission of the Curator.)*







'...a very beneficent piece of rascality', and the pun 'Peccavi, I have Scinde' (sinned) is usually attributed to Napier.

In an Indian General Order of 22 September 1843, the grateful Governor-General approved the issue of a silver medal to the troops who had participated in the campaign. The action or actions that the recipient was engaged in are inscribed on the reverse of the medal. The obverse of the medal depicts the 'young' head of Queen Victoria. The 22nd Regiment of Foot and the 1st Bombay European Regiment received Battle Honours for the two battles. Apart from the medal, all the troops who had participated in the campaign received a share of the considerable booty which was found in the palaces of the Amirs. **M**

**Above:**

*An artist's impression of one of the battles of the Scinde. (Regimental Headquarters, The Cheshire Regiment.)*

**Right:**

*General officer's frock coat worn by Sir Charles during the Scinde campaign.*

**Below:**

*Scinde campaign medals awarded to two non-commissioned officers of the 22nd Regiment.*



Hosp. Sgt. W. Nugent

Sgt Major Thos Stack





## VIETNAM MARINES

# Tiger Stripes and Green Berets

### BACKGROUND

AFTER WORLD WAR II a number of associated Marine Corps existed in Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. These had been raised, with the help of western aid, to fight the various conflicts to contain Communist expansion in the Far East. Present at various times were other Marines from the United States, the Netherlands, France, and Great Britain. Three of these Corps fought together in Vietnam from 1965 through 1973: the Vietnamese Marines, the American Marines, and the Korean Marines. Common to each was a reputation for toughness; strong unit pride and loyalty; and a privileged place within the political structure of their respective countries. This article describes one of these formations, the Thuy Quan Luc Chien (TQLC) or Vietnam's Marines.

When the French left Indochina in 1954, they had established the fledgling armed forces of the Vietnamese Republic which included the riverine force of the navy and an assortment of army commandos that had provided the assault troops. These river-assault divisions (*Dinassauts*) formed what Dr Bernard B. Fall noted as 'one

CHARLES D. MELSON, ROBERT PITTA and  
EDWARD J. WAGES

AMONGST THE ARMED forces of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), the Marines — modelled and trained on the American Marine Corps — established themselves as a fighting force to be reckoned with. Here we look at their uniforms, insignia and equipment.

of a few worthwhile contributions' to military tactics of the Indochina War (1945-1954). The commandos were grouped at Nha Trang at the separation of Vietnam into north and south. When the Geneva agreement arranged this partition of Vietnam pending elections, the Americans and their allies moved to help the government of South Vietnam against the Communist bloc supported People's Republic of Vietnam.

On 1 October 1954, the commandos were designated as the Marine Infantry of the Vietnamese Navy, consisting of 1,137 Marines and a single American advisor. In April 1956, this unit became known as the Vietnamese Marine Corps consisting of a Marine Group of two landing battalions. In 1961, the Vietnamese Marines became part of the South Vietnamese armed forces' general reserve. Expansion resulted

after successful employment against dissidents and bandits, which led to a 5,000-man Marine Brigade in 1962. Marine influence increased with the role it played in complex national politics that saw Marines involved in coups in 1960, 1963, 1964, and 1965. This continual balancing of power by the Vietnamese was reflected in assignment of forces, commanders, and the direction of the war.

Marines comprised 6,500 of the total of 565,350 South Vietnamese in the armed forces in 1965. Their headquarters were located in Saigon with outlying facilities at Song Than, Thu Duc, and Vung Tau. The Marines were commanded by a Colonel, who was both the service and tactical commander, and answerable only to the high command of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces. The formation of training and replace-

*Vietnamese and American Marines discuss tactics at a brigade field headquarters. Exhibited are a variety of emblems and headgear, to include the rain hat and beret. The Vietnamese captain on the right wears full-size shoulder board rank insignia. (USMC.)*

ment centres allowed the Marines to keep up to strength without relying on the army for personnel. Officers and non-commissioned officers attended schools in the United States at Quantico, Virginia, where a generation of Vietnamese and Americans met and served together. A 28-man US Marine advisory unit maintained advisors at the battalion level. The highest ranking Marine, General Le Nguyen Khang, observed that his men were proud 'to be associated in spirit and deed with the select group of professional military men of many nations who call themselves Marines'.

### INSIGNIA, UNIFORMS, AND EQUIPMENT

An examination of some of the uniforms and insignia of the Vietnamese Marines is useful in considering their performance, because it reflects the organisation's view of itself as a military



An American advisor with Vietnamese Marines in full combat order, including the 'ARVN' pack and the American M1 steel helmet with its leaf pattern helmet cover. The advisor wears the Marine Brigade patch on his shoulder. (USMC.)



élite. Designations and numbering to identify items is complicated by language differences, though in most case names were just the translation of equivalent French and American terms.

Nine enlisted grades and seven officer grades were used through Brigadier-General (the one star grade). In 1955, the Marines used army rank and insignia of grade. The rank structure still reflected French influence, beginning with Private, through Private-First-Class, Lance-Corporal, Corporal, Sergeant, Staff-Sergeant, Gunnery-Sergeant, Master-Sergeant and Warrant-Officer. The officers included 2nd Lieutenant, 1st Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Lieutenant-Colonel and Colonel. By 1956, they began using naval rank insignia with army titles and structure. Officers and enlisted men both wore their rank on shoulder boards in silver braid instead of naval gold on a black background. In the field this was simplified by wearing a single shoulder board on the front of the shirt. This resulted in a miniature version that could be fastened on a shirt or pocket button. With the American involvement, miniature rank

insignia embroidered in black on green cloth was worn on the collar or headgear. All three types of rank badge were used throughout the war. On occasion, Vietnamese army metal pin-on rank was worn by officers during joint operations.

Emblems evolved with the Marines over time and defy real documentation. The earliest included Vietnamese navy badges worn on caps and berets. These were in metal and embroidered forms and the emblems were gold for officers and silver for enlisted men. The distinct Marine Infantry badge had more longer use through 1965. It displayed two crossed

anchors in both metal and embroidered variations. The embroidered beret badge first used dark blue and then later a green backing. The officers, embroidered version had a wreath of rice stalks around two crossed anchors while the enlisted version had the crossed anchors only (within a circle on the beret badge).

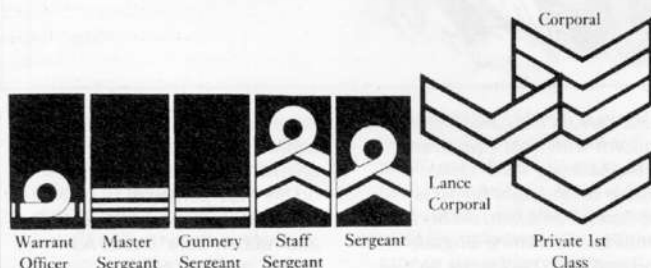
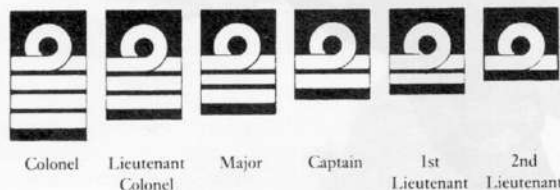
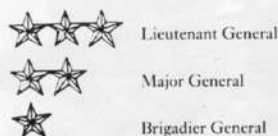
In 1959, a service device was adopted with an eagle, globe, and anchor motif. It closely followed the American Marine emblem, but incorporated traditional Vietnamese features. Documented features included an anchor through a globe for the Marine's naval character, a five-pointed red star with Vietnam in the centre indicating combat spirit and the five parts of the world, and an eagle spreading its wings represented unyielding martial spirit. A black background stood for bravery in difficult situations — the colour of a 'death volunteer'. This design eventually formed the basis for cap, beret, formation, and service insignia. Again there were both officer and enlisted versions. The metal cap and beret badges were gold and silver for officers and all-gold for enlisted. The embroidered beret badge was backed in green and later with red. It replaced the Marine Infantry badge by the mid-1960s.

While early field uniforms were worn plain, major variations of service and unit insignia developed. For example, a Marine advisor recalled that in 1967 he wore the brigade shoulder patch, the service emblem on his breast pocket, and a coloured battalion name tape. A full-colour service

emblem on a black shield worn on the upper left sleeve indicated the Marine Group or Brigade and was the first unit insignia worn. Later a full-colour service emblem and motto (Dan-Du To-Quoc, meaning 'Honour and Country') in a green circle was worn on the right breast pocket as the Corps insignia around the time additional brigades were formed. Finally a full colour emblem on a green shield was worn on the upper left sleeve to indicate the Marine Division, replacing the previous brigade emblem. The emblem on the left sleeve was in line with the Army of the Republic of Vietnam practice. Cloth emblems worn on the combat uniform were generally of a high quality woven (Bevo) manufacture, though printed variations were for general issue. When sewn on, newspaper was sometimes used to provide backing for smooth mounting.

Battalion insignia developed from coloured name tags worn over the right breast pocket, based on colours used to facilitate the assembly of units after amphibious or riverine landings. Observed in use were the following: division or brigade headquarters units used green with white letters, the 1st Battalion in blue with white letters, 2nd Battalion in purple with black letters, 3rd Battalion in olive with white letters, 4th Battalion in red with black letters, 5th Battalion in maroon or black with gold letters, 6th Battalion in green with black letters, 7th Battalion in orange, 8th Battalion in blue with red letters, and 9th Battalion in brown with green letters. The artillery battalions used white and red combi-

#### VNMC INSIGNIA OF GRADE







Paul Hannon's paintings show:  
**A1 VNMN service dress, 1965.** Seasonal uniforms were available, including khaki dress with service cap as worn by this student at the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico,

Virginia. The winter uniform consisted of a dark brown blouse with shoulder board rank insignia, white shirt, black tie and brown trousers.  
**A2 VNMN squad leader, Delta region, 1967.** This small unit

leader wears the camouflage uniform with field equipment in the Mekong River Delta. Visible on the right breast is the service emblem, on his left shoulder the Marine Brigade unit emblem. He carries an

American-made Thompson .45 calibre sub-machine-gun, and offensive and smoke grenades on his M56 personal equipment. He wears canvas and rubber 'Bata' boots. **A3 VNMN artillery officer,**



B3



B1



B2



**Saigon, 1968.** Officers' uniforms were identical to the enlisted uniform, but were subject to better tailoring and details. This forward observer is calling in an artillery fire mission in Saigon during the

Tet Offensive. He has a pistol in a shoulder holster, but is really armed with his map and radio. The brigade patch is worn on his left shoulder and over his right pocket is a name tape in the artillery battalion

colours of red letters on a white background. No service emblem is worn.

**B1 VNMC parade dress, 1969.** The camouflage combat uniform was so associated

with the Vietnamese Marines that it was used in lieu of a dress uniform during the war. This was achieved for public

Continued overleaf



occasions by adding medals or ribbons, unit award fourragères, coloured neck scarves, parade aiguillettes, white gloves and belts. **B2 VNMC grenadier, Quang Tri City, 1972.** At times, supply availability caused variations in the issue of clothing. In this case a Marine is wearing the ARVN airborne camouflage pattern without service or unit insignia. His weapon is the M79 grenade launcher, and his condition reflects the bitter fighting to recapture the Quang Tri Citadel. His combat equipment is the American M56 pattern. **B3 VNMC advisor, Huey City, 1973.**

American Marines served with the Vietnamese Marines up to the ceasefire in 1973. They were part of the naval advisory group, and wore VNMC uniforms with the addition of a black-on-green 'U.S. Marines' name tape over the left pocket. Both American and Vietnamese rank insignia were worn to avoid confusion. Depicted is the last senior Marine advisor, Colonel Joshua Dorsey.

(Both plates reproduced by kind permission of Osprey Publishing Ltd, London, from 'Elite 43': Vietnam Marines 1965-73 by Charles D. Melson, paintings by Paul Hannon.)



cers wore khaki frame-caps, khaki uniforms, black shoes, and white gloves; enlisted men wore green berets, khaki uniforms, black combat boots and white gloves. Service dress included a dark brown jacket with white shirt and black tie or khaki dress with either long and short sleeve shirts.

The Marine combat dress was the characteristic uniform of the war. It served on ceremonial occasion with the addition of white gloves, white duty belts, coloured neck scarves, white parade shoulder cords and white boot laces. The Marine band had its own distinct variation on this theme that included a tailored uniform shirt worn outside the trousers. Medals or medal ribbons were worn and four classes of unit awards were indicated by *fourragères* worn on the left shoulder in red (gallantry), green (merit), yellow (national) and a combination of all three colours for nine previous citations. The 1st and 2nd Infantry Battalions were the most highly decorated Marine units.

In regard to headgear, the black army beret and the Marine Infantry badge were worn at first, followed by the blue naval beret. In 1965, standard headgear was a green beret with Marine Infantry badge. Also used were utility covers or rain hats in camouflage pattern. The steel American-style M1 helmet was worn with either a net or American leaf-pattern cloth camouflage cover.

The first combat uniform was

the olive green shirt and trousers used by the army and was similar in cut to the American OG 107 fatigues. This remained in use as basic training and fatigue clothing well after the adaption of the camouflage uniform, more from economy than sentiment. The distinctive 'sea-wave' pattern uniform, the so-called tiger stripes, was adapted in 1956 as a combat uniform. The four-colour cloth was imported and manufactured into uniforms in South Vietnam (there were also examples of the army camouflage leaf pattern being used). This allowed for considerable variations in style and quality. In general it consisted of a shirt with two covered chest pockets, trousers with two thigh and two seat pockets cut along the American pattern. Pen and cigarette pockets were popular modifications on the shirt sleeves and trouser legs. A black web belt with solid-face brass buckle was standard, while the American Marine open-face buckle was popular as well. Footwear ranged from local canvas Bata boots, full-leather boots, to the American nylon and leather tropical combat boot ('jungle-boots').

The Vietnamese Marines who went to war should have reflected knowledge of the 'soldier's load' by 1965. In practice culture, supply and circumstance were shown to have been just as important factors in determining what was carried into battle. Individual combat equipment varied greatly over the period, from a mixture of

American Marine advisors in a lighter moment in 1972 displaying the field uniform as worn by officers with a variety of personal touches, the result of being 'away from the flag-pole'. (USMC.)

French and American surplus to the standardised issue of M56 load carrying equipment by the US Military Advisory Command Vietnam beginning in 1965. This included replacement of M44 and M45 combat and cargo packs with the theatre-designed semi-rigid indigenous rucksack, the 'ARVN pack'. One distinctive Vietnamese item was the individual hammock made from parachute nylon and suspension lines and used for living in the field.

In 1965, the Vietnamese were armed with American .30 calibre small arms that had been in existence since World War II; M1 rifles, M1 carbines, M1911 pistols, M1A1 sub-machine guns and M1918 Browning automatic rifles. These weapons required the use of distinctive webbing and accessories to carry the ammunition and magazines. Eventually the Marines were outfitted with M16s and newer small arms by the Military Advisory Command Vietnam at the same time as the other South Vietnamese forces. The Marines were given a priority for this along with the airborne units of the national reserve.

Another characteristic Vietnamese field item was the ever-present squad aluminium cooking pot. The cooking pot

nations (ie, 1st Artillery Battalion used white with red letters), while the amphibious support battalion used green with gold or red letters. American advisors added a tape over the left breast pocket that had 'U.S. Marines' in black letters on green cloth tape.

Eventually distinct battalion patches were worn on the upper right sleeve. The infantry battalions had a series of nicknames and slogans that were reflected by these battalion insignia: 1st Battalion's 'Wild Bird', 2nd Battalion's 'Crazy Buffalo', 3rd Battalion's 'Sea Wolf', 4th Battalion's 'Killer Shark', 5th Battalion's 'Black Dragon', 6th Battalion's 'Sacred Bird', 7th Battalion's 'Black Tiger'. For the artillery units, these were the 1st Battalion's 'Lightning Fire', 2nd Battalion's 'Sacred Arrow' and 3rd Battalion's 'Sacred Bow'. The support and service battalions followed this example and one advisor observed that these emblems showed a delicate quality not found in their American equivalents.

Like the other Marines, the Vietnamese had uniforms that reflected climate and occasion: for full-dress occasions officers wore white frame-caps, white uniforms, white shoes and gloves; non-commissioned offi-



was an essential item because of the way the Vietnamese fed in the field. The Marines carried five days' rations of rice, dried salted fish and canned sardines. What was not issued had to be acquired locally. A typical meal consisted of five types of food: one salted, one fried or roasted, vegetable soup, green vegetables, and rice. A fermented sauce, *nouc-mam*, was served as a spice and source of protein. Problems resulted if the tactical situation prevented meals from being obtained and prepared. If circumstances did not allow resupply or preparation, then the Marines would go hungry. This included American advisors who were present, most of whom lost weight when with the Vietnamese in the field...

## ORGANISATION AND TROOP LIST

In 1965, the Vietnamese Marine Brigade had a brigade headquarters, two task force headquarters ('A' and 'B'), five infantry battalions, an artillery battalion and supporting companies of engineers, motor transport, military police, medical, and reconnaissance. The battalion was the primary focus of unit esprit and the paternal form of leadership that reflected the Vietnamese society. They were manned by long-serving professional officers and Marine volunteers who had acquired a great deal of experience at war. Infantry battalions contained 36 officers and 840 men arranged in four rifle companies and a headquarters and service company. Rifle companies were numbered from one to four in each battalion and contained three rifle platoons and a weapons platoon. Mortars, heavy machine-guns, communications and medical support were at the battalion headquarters. Rifle squads consisted of 13 men in three fire teams of four men each and a squad leader.

In 1966, the Marines added another infantry battalion and realigned supporting units to become a more balanced combined arms force, though without armour, aircraft or logistic support. When possible, more than one battalion was used in conjunction with a task force or brigade headquarters to provide additional support. In 1968, the Marine Division of two brigades was created. In 1970, there were three brigades, nine infantry battalions, and three artillery battalions. Supporting units continued to be added through the following year, reaching a peak of 939 officers and 14,290 men at the time the Americans withdrew. To face



**Above left:** The Vietnamese Marine Corps service device worn on the right chest pocket. It displays the motto 'Honor and Country' and was adopted when the Marines expanded from a

brigade formation to division strength. (Pitta.)

the military crisis in 1975, three additional battalions and a fourth brigade were activated in time for the South Vietnamese defeat.

## COMBAT OPERATIONS

Starting from 1960, the date on Vietnam's campaign medal, armed conflict existed between the two Vietnams and their allies. This was a civil war that had international connotations between several world powers and their clients. The confrontation displayed a full spectrum of violence from individual terrorist acts and guerrilla fighting to conventional land combat, with extensive sea and air components. South Vietnam was divided into four corps or military regions, numbered from I along the northern demilitarised zone to IV in the southern Delta region. As part of the national reserve, the Vietnamese Marines were deployed from the 17th Parallel in the north to the islands of the extreme south. Characteristic employment was in response to critical situations requiring rapid movement with short notice. When assigned to a specific corps area, the Marines served under Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) general officers, the corps commanders. Prior to 1965, most

**Right and far right:** Examples of the battalion insignia worn on the right sleeve include these for the 1st (Wild Bird) and 2nd (Crazy Buffalo) Infantry Battalions, the two oldest formations in the Vietnamese Marines that derived from the riverine commandos of the First Indochina War. They were manufactured in woven (Bevo) and printed versions. (Besch.)



**Above right:** Formation insignia worn as a shoulder patch on the upper left sleeve followed the Vietnamese Army (ARVN)

operations were conducted by individual battalions in III and IV Corps. A variety of counterinsurgency operations was engaged in, including search and destroy, search and clear, helicopter and riverine assault, and security tasks.

After 1965, the Marines deployed more to the II and I Corps areas as the war progressed away from the Delta and Capital regions. Multiple battalion operations became the norm through the use of task force headquarters. Two battalions under Task Force 'A' concluded a series of operations over a four-month period that resulted in 444 Communists killed and another 150 taken prisoner. This operation included a notable engagement in April 1965 near An Thai, Binh Province, that resulted in the 2nd Infantry Battalion earning a US Presidential Unit Citation. From 1966 through 1967, the Marines spent more time in I Corps and conducted operations in conjunction with the Americans in this critical location. It was observed that Marines were in the field 75% of the time, then the highest figure obtained by South Vietnamese forces.

During the 1968 Tet Offensive, the Marines fought in both Saigon and Hue to defeat

practice. This shows the Marine Division insignia, while the earlier brigade emblem worn through 1968 had a black background and a more pronounced shield shape. (Pitta.)

the Communist attempt at a general uprising. Throughout this year the Vietnamese Marines maintained a casualty-to-kill ratio of one to seven. In March 1969, the 5th Infantry Battalion earned a US Naval Unit Citation for action in III Corps, near Bien Hoa. They killed 73 Communists, took 20 prisoner, and captured their weapons. The Marines took part in the aggressive South Vietnamese external operations that coincided with the American departure: Cambodia in 1970 and Laos in 1971. The Laotian incursion was the first time a division command post took the field to control manoeuvre brigades. By 1971, at least two Marine brigades remained in I Corps facing the demilitarised zone and the North Vietnamese. This filled, in part, the vacuum left when the Americans moved from this region.

During the spring offensive in 1972, the Vietnamese Marines were fully employed for the defence of the demilitarised zone and initially used piecemeal under control of the army. Later, the Marine Division established itself as a conventional fighting force in the month-long battle to recapture Quang Tri City. In the process they killed an estimated 17,819 North







**Left:**

The 'utility' shirt as worn by the Vietnamese, exhibits the type and placement of cloth insignia from the late 1960s. Notice the reinforced shoulders, epaulettes, and pen pocket on the left sleeve. The black on green name tag on the right indicates the 3rd Infantry Battalion, although no battalion sleeve patch is worn on this example from an American Major. Since these uniforms were custom-made, no manufacturing markings appear. (Pitta.)

Vietnam Armed Forces.

The Vietnamese Marines remained committed to the defence of the demilitarised zone through 1974. First ordered to protect Hue and Da Nang from the Communist attack in spring 1975, the Marines were hastily withdrawn with the collapse of the South Vietnamese in the northern provinces. Five battalion commanders and some forty company commanders were killed during this fighting. The division reorganised and deployed its remaining forces at Long Binh for the final battle for Saigon where it stayed through the subsequent fighting at the end of April 1975. At that point, the Vietnamese Marine Corps ceased to exist. For the Vietnamese, the conflict was the end of a 30-year civil war in which the Vietnamese Marine Corps played a part until the bitter end for 'Honour and Country'. **MI**

**Below:**

The utility trousers were similar in cut to the American OG 107 fatigues, with the addition of two leg pockets

and a smaller field dressing or cigarette pocket on one trouser leg. The fly buttons were covered, while all others were exposed. (Pitta.)



**Above:**

The utility cover or cap as worn by the Vietnamese, that was identical to the green sateen (OG 107) version worn by the Americans. It was

based on a World War II design that could be folded for storage in a pocket or helmet liner webbing when the M1 steel helmet was worn. (Pitta.)



**Above:**

The rain or jungle hat that was common for informal wear by Vietnamese and American Marines. With tailoring, it

served as a skull cap under the helmet and gave all-around protection from the sun or rain that the utility cover did not provide. (Pitta.)



# Early Uniforms of the Lancashire Hussars

Dr STEPHEN BULL

ALTHOUGH SOME authorities have linked the Lancashire Hussars with local Yeomanry units raised during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, the Lancashire Hussars were not formed until 1848. That year Sir John Gerard formed the first troop on his estate drawing on his tenantry and men from the neighbourhood of Garswood and Ashton-in-Makerfield, also Aspull, Billinge and Wigan. The men numbered 75 and Sir John was gazetted Major Commandant on 5 September, 1848<sup>1</sup>.

According to one account 'Sir John organised and accoutered them with the greatest liberality and in the most perfect manner, discarding the homespun material usually supplied to the army by contract, and providing them at his own expense with sword, belts, & c of a much superior kind'. Shortly afterwards a second troop was raised in St Helens and Windle with the numbers made up from Ormskirk and Liverpool. A band was also formed under Mr Charles Robins, many of the members being engaged from Park Lane Chapel band, and again the bill for the instruments was footed by the commanding officer<sup>2</sup>. Training in the first few years of the unit's existence was conducted at Garswood and Southport; a third troop was added in 1854.

## Right:

*Lancashire Hussar Officer in 'field dress', 1848. Notice the falling black cock tail plume to the crimson shako, crimson dress pantaloons and ornate sabretache. The jacket accords to the regular army 1846 regulation being 'entirely of blue cloth; Prussian collar full three inches deep, laced round and ornamented with Russia braid; single-breasted, with five rows of buttons'. This live button style jacket with 'gold gimp chain-loops' and loops of bright 'Russia' braid was replaced in 'full' dress with the style of many straight braids with small loops at the ends. (From T.A. Earle 'List of Officers', 1889.)*

## Far right:

*Trooper Thomas Ogden, Ashton Troop in undress c1860. The jacket is worn with 'pillbox' forage cap, gloves and barrel sash.* (Courtesy J.C. Anderson.)

RAISED IN 1848 and colourfully clad throughout the 19th century, the Lancashire Hussars form an ideal subject for distinctive model-making while at the same time showing some of the dress eccentricities of the period.

The first uniform of the regiment was described as 'very similar' to that of the 11th Prince Albert's Own Hussars. The officer's full dress was 'Blue Hussar jacket, fully laced with chain-lace in front, and braided on collar, cuffs, and back seams according to regimental pattern, pelisse, fully laced and trimmed with sable; pantaloons crimson; Hessian

boots; pouch-belt of stamped gilt metal; pouch gilt metal, with silver ornaments; busby, with gold cap lines; sword belt of gold lace, lined with crimson leather; sabretache crimson, edged with gold lace'. The men's dress was similar except that mixed blue and yellow worsted cord replaced gold, the pouch belt was black patent leather, the sword belt

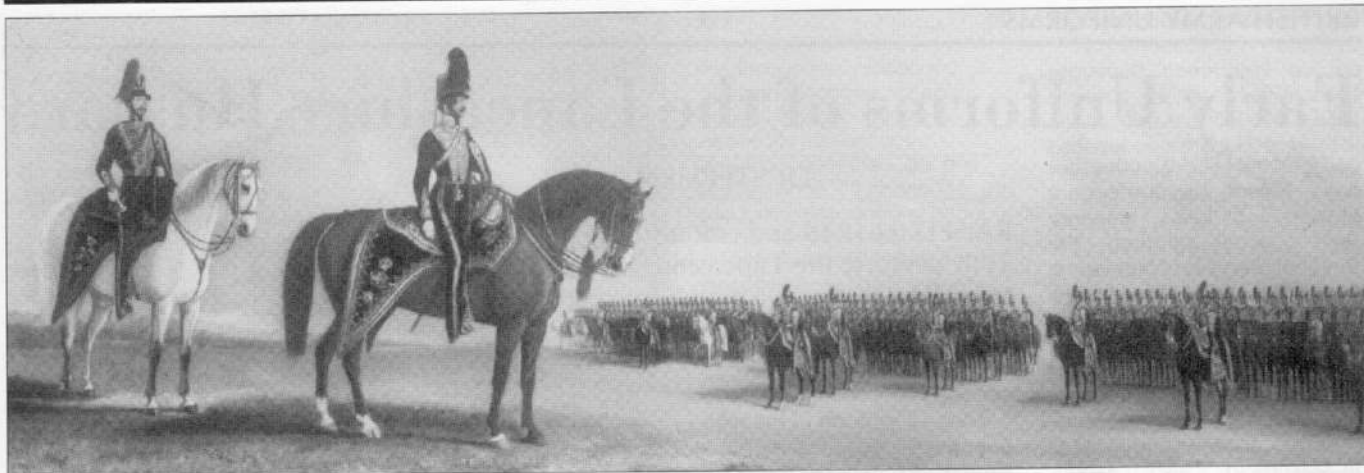
brown leather. The men also wore a crimson shako with a horse hair plume.

The horses were almost as splendidly attired; officer's mounts had blue shabraques edged with crimson 'vandykes' and deep gold lace and were adorned with the crown, royal cipher and Lancashire rose. The saddle had a leopardskin cover and a black sheepskin was worn in marching order. The men's horses had black sheepskins in all orders, over a blue shabraque with broad crimson lace and vandykes.

In 'field dress' officers adopted the red shako but with gold embroidery and black cock's tail plume. In 'undress' or 'morning dress' the hussar







**ABOVE:**

Sir Robert Tolver Gerard inspecting the Lancashire Hussars, by John Ferneley Junior, 1857. It was once thought that this painting was made six years earlier but internal details such as the presence of three troops confirm the later date. Crimson shakos are worn but not crimson pantaloons. (Lancashire County and Regimental Museum. Photo Mike Seed.)

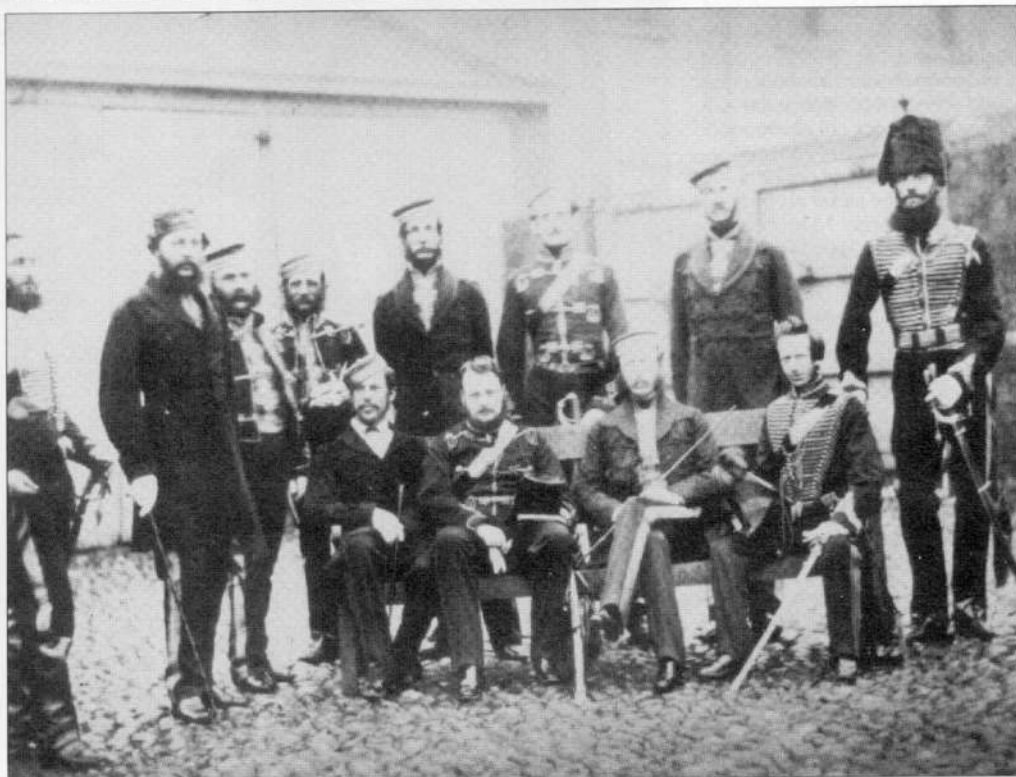


**Left:**

Detail of the Ferneley painting, showing the commanding officer and a trumpeter. The former has a leopardskin on the shabraque and gold lace whilst the latter has a lambskin and yellow lace. The trumpeter has a red plume and a white horse, as do the band just visible under Gerard's horse's neck. The lead figure in the band is a mounted kettle drummer. (Photo Mike Seed.)

jacket was replaced by a blue frock coat with 'black mohair braid and olivets' and the headgear was a crimson 'pill box' forage cap. Belts, pouch-

Officers at annual training, Southport 1864. **Left to right standing:** Cornet T.E. Withington (ex-Lancashire Militia); Cornet F.A. The Baron Stanley (previously Grenadier Guards, later Lord Stanley, Secretary for War); Cornet A.B. Moubert; Lieutenant F.W. Earle (ex-Lancashire Militia); Lieutenant-Colonel Sir R.T. Gerard (ex-6th Dragoon Guards); Captain J.T.F. Westby (ex-2nd Dragoon Guards and Scots Greys); Major F.S. Gerard; Captain E.B.W. The Baron Skelmersdale; Lieutenant W.S.C. Standish (ex-7th Dragoons). **Left to right seated:** Lieutenant E.H. Petre; Lieutenant T.A.J. The Viscount Southwell; Captain W.J. Legh (ex-21st Fusiliers); Surgeon J.P. Scowcroft. (Photo A.L.M. Cook.)





es, and sabretache were all substituted with plainer models in black patent leather<sup>3</sup>.

Such was the official picture but the regimental 'Annals' have it that the crimson pantaloons were soon discontinued except in the mess and were not worn at all by the troopers. The men were always in blue and wore their shakos cased in oil-skin in wet weather. The sabretache was later abandoned. A painting by John Ferneley junior, dated 1857, helps add colour to these written accounts. In this the regiment parades before Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Robert Tolver Gerard apparently in 'field dress'. Both officers and men have blue legwear and crimson shakos; shabraques and sabretaches are also worn, again by all ranks. The band, including a mounted kettle drummer, ride white horses and the officers' chargers are distinguished by a red throat plume<sup>4</sup>.

Another painting, which passed through the hands of a London art dealer in the early 1960s, the whereabouts of which are not known to the present writer, purported to show Sir Robert Tolver Gerard beside his mount in circa 1861. The picture was attributed to Henry Barraud and showed the

*Officers in undress, 1866. Blue frock coats are worn over crimson waistcoats; overalls are of both the plain and leather-booted variety. Canes are carried and pillboxes with double bands of gold lace worn. (Photo A.L.M. Cook.)*

*Officer in undress uniform, 1848, as depicted in T.A. Earle's 'List of Officers'. The undress uniform clearly changed little between 1848 and 1870. Notice the plain version of the sabretache, black leather with rose and crown badges.*

subject in a rather casual version of full dress with busby with red and white plume, no pelisse, and blue overalls. Both shabraque with leopardskin and sabretache were shown<sup>5</sup>.

Photographic evidence from the mid-1820s adds further to our knowledge of officers' uniform of the period. Two such pictures show a group of officers during the training at Southport in 1864. Happily they are named, and show a variety of orders of dress. For example Captain Edward Bootle-Wilbraham, Baron Skelmersdale, wears approximately the dress of the Barraud painting with busby, sabretache and white gloves but no pelisse. Captain William Michael Ince Anderton, ex-17th Lancers, is pictured in the shako, a short undress stable jacket with only three lines of lace and a sword with the 'undress' patent leather sabretache. On this version of the sabretache appears a Lancashire rose with a crown or monogram above it. Various figures demonstrate that the overalls were both of the plain variety or 'booted' with leather on the lower leg.

Several versions of 'undress' or 'morning dress' are also seen, usually with a long frock



coat over what appears to be the ornate embroidered crimson mess waistcoat. At least one character wears a civilian style shirt and bow tie, whilst another wears an undress jacket over a waistcoat. 'Pill box' forage caps are worn and canes carried. The Surgeon, James Parkinson Scowcroft, MD, carries a cocked hat.

Evidence relating to other ranks is relatively scarce but at least two photographs showing privates in undress or 'walking out' dress survive from the 1860s. In both cases a barrel

sash, gloves and pill box cap are worn<sup>6</sup>.

The most remarkable survival is, however, the complete uniform of Lieutenant Francis Arthur Farrell. It is this which will form the subject of the second part of this article. **MI**

#### Notes

1 A. Sleight (ed) *The Royal Militia and Yeomanry Cavalry Army List*, London 1850, p18. The other officers of the unit at its inception were Captain W.C. Yates ex-1st Royal Dragoons, Gerard's younger brother F.S. Gerard and L.C. Standish, both Lieutenants. See also H. Plant *The Gerard's of Ashton-in-Makerfield*, Wigan, 1982.

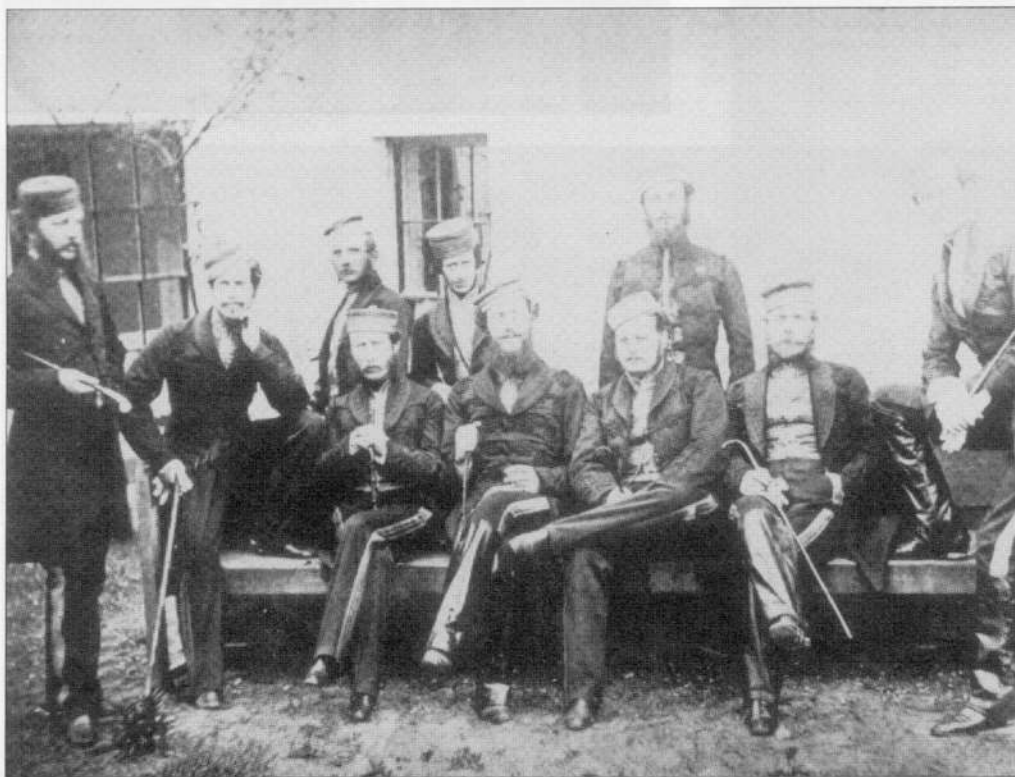
2 T.A. Earle *List of Officers who have served in the Lancashire Hussars, Yeomanry Cavalry with Some Short Notes and Annals of the Regiment*, Liverpool, 1889. See also G. Fox *The History of Park Lane Chapel*, Manchester, 1897.

3 Royal Militia and Yeomanry List *op cit*.

4 Major A.M. Annand 'Lt. Colonel Sir Robert Rolver Gerard and the Lancashire Hussars' in *Journal of the Society of Army Historical Research*, December 1962, No 164, pp196-200. The painting has since been purchased for the Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry collection and hangs in the County Museum at Preston.

5 Details and photostat supplied by Major Roy Wilson to Mr F. Read 1986. Written enquiries to the main London auction houses provided no further information.

6 Photographs from the collections of Colonel A.L.M. Cook, J.C. Anderson and R. Smith, copies of which have either been published elsewhere or have been donated to the Duke of Lancaster's Own Collection.





# Waffen-SS Palm Tree and Clump Camouflage

Dr J.-F. BORSARELLO

THE MOST CURIOUS pattern in Waffen-SS camouflage is the so-called 'Palm Tree and Clump' (PTC) design, printed on Zeltbahn material, reversible spring/autumn.

THANKS TO THE Richardson Report\* we know all about the fabric of camouflaged clothing worn by the German armed forces, including their colours, the rolling or screening processes used to print the material, the products used and even the names of engineers and artists involved in their production.

The PTC is the only pattern to contain figurative drawings (flowers, leaves, laurel palms), and the only pattern to have been used solely for field smocks and, rarely, helmet covers. All the other SS patterns, particularly of the oak or plane tree pattern or burred edge patterns, were used to make Zeltbahns, winter padded clothes, one- and two-piece suits, hoods, gloves and helmet covers. Among the thousands of photos taken between 1939 and 1945, nobody has yet discovered a single picture showing the PTC pattern on other garments.

The pattern was made by printing rolls of material on which the pattern was repeated every 54cm, give or take a millimetre. So, the camouflage effect is not actually that good because nature does not repeat itself in such a regular fashion. (This was also a defect of Italian camouflage.) Perhaps it was for this reason that other German camouflage printing was done on large screens in which the pattern was only repeated every eight metres.

It would seem that the PTC pattern is one of the oldest German designs, for it can be seen in photos taken during the Polish and French campaigns of 1939 and 1940 — alongside other designs, some of them clearly experimental. Later, in 1945, the pattern was printed using Hydron Olive GX vat dye, making it probably the world's first effective day/night camouflage giving concealment against infrared surveil-

*A soldier of the 'European' 5th SS-Panzer Division 'Wiking' wearing one of the rare PTC helmet covers. (Noss-Bardutzky Collection.)*

lance devices.

Generally, the PTC smock was made with laurel leaves on the arms and the clumps on the back. On the other parts of the smock there were curious spots, like saw teeth, hidden in circles like flowers, and stylised groups of black spots also resembling flowers, or pine leaves. On the lower part of the smock, the leaves are shorter and darker, giving the appearance of shadowed vegetation.

One mystery is why collectors first started calling this pattern 'palm tree', and why the name has persisted, because the shape of a laurel leaf is totally different to that of a palm leaf. The phrase is not used in German (although it is in French — 'palmier'), and it is possible that the misnomer can be attributed to the early *Manual of the Waffen-SS* by Walther Karl

\*Camouflage Fabrics Both Plain and Printed for Military Use by the German SS and German Army by Francis S. Richardson, QMC Consultant, 20 July 1945 (reprinted 1983 Publications, London, 1988).



*Men of the 5th SS-Panzer Division 'Wiking' all wearing PTC camouflage. (Noss-Bardutzky Collection.)*





Holzmann (Bellona/Argus), which was based on very poor research.

From the collector's point of view, the PTC smock is one of the best to acquire, not least because it has not, until very recently (in Paris) been decently faked. This example came from somewhere in the former Communist Bloc; other American and German fakes are easy to detect, for they are shoddy and this is reflected in their low price. Still, they are ideal to wear when decorating the house!



**Above:**  
*PTC smock worn summer side out.*

**Above right:**  
*Autumn pattern PTC, (M.D. Beaver Collection.)*

**Right:**  
*Early pattern smock showing detail of laurel leaf camouflage.*

**Below:**  
*Detail of autumn pattern PTC.*





**Napoleonic Uniforms** by John R. Elting (2 vols). Macmillan (USA); Greenhill (UK & Commonwealth & Europe); ISBN 0-02-897115-9; 864pp; colour throughout. \$250.00/£150.00.

No Napoleonic enthusiast can be unaware of the watercolour paintings of Herbert Knötel, who died exactly 30 years ago. The son of the equally famous Richard Knötel, with whom he worked on the celebrated *Grosse Uniformkunde*, Herbert served as a cavalry officer on the Eastern Front during the First World War. Afterwards, he continued his father's work and, although most of his files were destroyed during the Russian assault on Berlin in 1945, he succeeded in escaping and continued painting until failing health finally forced him to stop.

Now, American historian John R. Elting, a retired US Army Colonel whose previous works include *Swords Around a Throne* and *Military History and Atlas of the Napoleonic Wars*, has collected together over 900 of Knötel's paintings of the French army and its allies from 1790 to 1830, with the emphasis strongly on Napoleon's Grande Armée. Elting began collecting Knötel watercolours in the 1950s and enjoyed a vigorous correspondence with the artist, who painted several figures for him on commission.

Knötel's style is unmistakable, and his experiences during the First World War combined with a sure hand and an intimate grasp of anatomy result in figures which are equally unmistakably soldiers, whether in parade dress or ravaged by the rigours of campaigning. Every figure is individual, the faces especially commanding attention, and Napoleonic enthusiasts have been hoping for a compilation such as this fine two-volume book for years. Each plate is accompanied by a detailed caption, and the possibilities for figure modellers are endless. Other beneficiaries will include teachers and students, artists, costumers and wargamers.

Naturally, given what they are — and each book must weigh at least 5lb! — these tomes are not cheap; but they are the kind of books which will appreciate in value as the years go by, and we are promised further volumes on the other nationalities of the period so now is the time to begin collecting. They are 'instant classics' without a shadow of doubt.

**Hot Blood & Cold Steel: Life and Death in the Trenches of the First World War** by Andy Simpson. Tom Donovan Publishing; ISBN 1-871085-12-8; 227pp; 16pp mono plates; appendices, bibliography & index; £17.95.

This is an unusual and well thought-out book on the personal experience of trench warfare. Unlike many on the same subject,

## BOOK REVIEWS

it is unemotional in tone, allowing the words of those who were there at the time to convey the awfulness of the conflict, as well as the humorous side of things. The author, a post-graduate research student, has sought quite successfully to redress what he considers an imbalance in the way the Great War is usually presented, with a callous high command and the men in the trenches suffering unmitigated awfulness. He demonstrates that all senior officers were not men of that type and that life in the trenches was not devoid of its lighter moments. Drawing mainly on contemporary rather than retrospective letters and diaries, he has produced a commentary which is both readable and interesting, sensibly broken down into subject areas rather than purely chronological. Thought-provoking.

**The Regimental History of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards** by Michael Mann. Home Headquarters, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, Maindy Barracks, Whitchurch Road, Cardiff CF4 3YE; ISBN 0-85955-180-X; 589pp; 50 mono & 16 colour illu. plus maps; appendices & index; £45.00 plus £3.25 p&p.

This fabulous book, with a preface from the Regiment's Colonel-in-Chief, HM The Queen Mother, relates in minute detail the history of the King's Dragoon Guards and the Queen's Bays from the accession of James II until amalgamation in 1959, and subsequently as The Queen's Dragoon Guards. The battle accounts are graphic and the maps and illustrations excellent. From Flanders in the 17th century through Blenheim, Ramillies, Malplaquet, Fontenoy and Minden (amongst others) in the 18th, Quatre Bras, Waterloo, the Crimea, Indian Mutiny, China, the Zulu Wars, Sudan and the Boer War in the 19th, to major battles of the First and Second World Wars and latterly in Malaya, Borneo, Beirut, Cyprus and the Gulf War, the story of the Dragoon Guards is an almost encapsulation of the history of the British Army itself. Throughout it all runs also the theme of Ireland, with the first 'tour' in the 1690s and the last (so far) 300 years later.

Privately published by the Regiment with a great deal of care and attention from production team, typesetters, printers and binders, it is simply a magnificent volume to own.

**Dieppe Through the Lens and Dieppe Then and Now** by Hugh G. Henry Jr. Battle of Britain Prints International ('After the Battle'); ISBNs 0-900913-76-2 & -78-9; 64 & 32pp; mono illu. throughout; £12.95 & £4.95.

A new and promising venture from Winston and Gordon Ramsey's 'After the Battle' team are the 'Through the Lens' and 'Battlefield Photo Album' series. The first, rather than presenting the familiar 'then and now' photographs, is a picture essay with historical photos and the usual brief but authoritative text and detailed captions. The second, produced in ring-binder form (although imitation leather-bound and small enough to fit a large pocket), begins with a map annotated with numerals indicating specific spots, followed by a wartime photo on the left-hand page and a blank page facing it — on which you can paste down your own photo of the same scene today.

The first concept is traditional — landscape format, glossy paper, large photos, orders of battle, etc; the second is innovative (in the military field at least, although railway spotters have used the same technique for generations) and clever. What better way to explore a battlefield than with the help of a clear map and photos showing what the scene looked like 50 years ago?

Needless to say, the text of the first book — which deals almost exclusively with the experiences of the 14th Canadian Tank Regiment — is impeccable; as it should be, being extracted from the author's Master of Arts dissertation. Apart from those accompanying the introduction, the photographs themselves are all the work of German army photographers, and are outstanding in quality (not least through the high printing standard).

The publishers inform us that the fact these first two books cover the same battlefield is coincidental, and that future titles will not necessarily be paired in the same way. We look forward to seeing how the series progresses.

**Doughboy to GI: US Army Clothing and Equipment 1900-1945** by Kenneth Lewis; Norman D. Landing Publishing, 216 Lightwoods Hill, Warley Woods, W. Midlands B67 5EH; 272 pages, 860-plus photos, 16pp colour photos; glossary, index; £50.00 plus £2.50 P&P. This remarkable reference book, privately published by the author, will be a bible for all US uniform enthusiasts, and Mr Lewis will be blessed by generations of collectors yet unborn. The more than 860 photos, of generally high quality, are a mixture of wartime pictures showing items of uniform and personal equipment clearly, and studio close-ups (the majority) of the items themselves from Mr Lewis's collection. Size naturally varies with subject, from almost page-deep for coats, etc, to montages of six or eight hats on a page; but the page size is 11 x 8in, and

the printing of reasonable standard throughout, so the vast majority are sharp enough for all practical purposes. Photos are accompanied by brief but fact-filled captions identifying and describing the subjects, using the official contemporary terminology, and drawing attention to, eg, detail differences between evolving models. In other words, they give exactly the information that the collector needs.

Space forbids even a summarised listing of the exact contents; but there will be few items indeed which the collector will fail to find here, from field jackets to obscure pieces of web equipment, from socks to knives, from washing kit to paper ephemera. The book includes a good deal of US Marine Corps and US Army Air Force material as well as standard 'GI' kit. The colour section is almost entirely devoted to shoulder sleeve insignia.

There has long been a need for such a book, and it is remarkable that — not for the first time (we recall Jim Moran's excellent *US Marine Corps Uniforms and Equipment in World War 2* published last year by Windrow & Greene) — it is an English author and publisher who has tackled the task. We understand that Windrow & Greene plan a major all-colour book for this Christmas showing US Army uniforms and equipment of World War 2 being worn by live models against outdoor backgrounds, in their established style. If this is true, then that and Mr Lewis's work will together represent the answer to all collectors' prayers. At £50 this is not a cheap work, but it is first rate value and highly recommended.

**Poles Apart: The Polish Airborne at the Battle of Arnhem** by George F. Cholewczynski. Greenhill; ISBN 1-85367-165-7; 318pp; 16pp mono illu.; appendices & bibliography; £17.95.

The contribution of the 1st Independent Polish Parachute Brigade during Operation 'Market Garden' is often relegated to little more than a footnote in the history books, so this meticulously researched book (which took nearly ten years to write) is particularly welcome.

The Brigade was originally formed in September 1941 by Major-General Stanislaw Sosabowski, the intention being that it would be used to support an uprising by the Polish Home Army (in whose ranks Sosabowski's son, Stanislaw Jr, was serving). Unfortunately — or perhaps fortunately, as events turned out — the Brigade was instead sent in on the third day of the Arnhem operation while the Home Army searched the skies in vain for them.

Their performance has been a subject of controversy ever since the battle, for they were accused by the British high command of incompetence and obstructive-



ness. Now Mr Cholewczynski sets the record straight, combining the results of interviews and correspondence with survivors, with in-depth research amongst documents from the period. He describes in vivid 'on the spot' detail how the Poles in fact fought with great skill and courage under the most difficult of circumstances. It is a fascinating story, well told and deserving of a wide readership.

**The Scottish Regiments** by Diana M. Henderson, HarperCollins; ISBN 0-00-470011-2; 183pp; colour & mono illu throughout; appendices; £8.99.

As His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, says in his foreword to this very attractive book, 'The fighting capability of the Scots has been recognised throughout Scotland's history... The regimental system is peculiar to the British Army, but nowhere has it a firmer base than among the people and clans of Scotland... Dr Henderson has written a lively and interesting history of each of the regiments from their earliest days (in the 17th century) right up to their participation in the Falklands and Gulf campaigns. I have no doubt that it will become a reference book for serious students and scholars of military history, but there is also much to fascinate the general reader.'

There is little we can add to that: it is a finely produced book covering the histories of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, Scots Guards, Royal Scots, Royal Highland Fusiliers, King's Own Scottish Borderers, Cameronians, Black Watch, Queen's Own Highlanders, Gordon Highlanders and Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The author is herself an officer in the TA and includes appendices on the Scottish TA, battle honours and Scottish military music. Recommended, not just for its lucid text, but also for the superb colour plates.

**The Visual Dictionary of Special Military Forces** ed Louise Tucker, Dorling Kindersley; ISBN 0-7513-1013-1; 64pp; colour throughout; index; £9.99.

The title of this book should really include the word 'equipment' because that is what it is actually all about, not special forces units or operations. To a larger format than *Knight*, it is a similar compendium of double-page spreads with heavily annotated photographs covering, in fact, not just special forces' weapons, vehicles and other equipment such as skis and parachutes, but a variety of other topics. These include, for example, such items as silenced pistols and suitcase radios as used by SOE and OSS, midget submarines and human torpedoes, a mountain howitzer, sniping rifles, infrared and passive light intensifying

surveillance equipment, sabotage devices, radios, encoding and decoding machines, escape and survival equipment and even a selection of espionage devices such as concealed cameras, a CIA key-casting kit and a briefcase tape recorder. It is a fascinating compilation, beautifully photographed as usual, but not quite what the title would lead you to expect!

**Osprey Men-at-Arms series: all 48pp, 8 colour plates, circa 35 mono illu; £6.50 each. MAA 259: The Mamluks 1250-1517** by Dr David Nicolle, plates by Angus McBride.

The usual admirably concise survey of a slightly obscure Middle Eastern subject from Dr Nicolle; the mamluks are one of those peoples whose actual origin and character have always been slightly hazy to this reviewer. No more: the text gives a succinct explanation, and traces their development from slave-soldiers of the Ayyubids to the sustainers of a distinct mamluk military state based on Cairo. The organisation, character, tactics, clothing and weapons of the mamluk armies are described against the background of the history of their state. Monochrome illustrations are the usual mixture of early manuscript illustrations and sculpted depictions, surviving artifacts, photos of architecture, and drawings, surviving artifacts, photos of architecture, and drawings and diagrams. Mr McBride's plates are clear and attractive, covering a wide range of types over the whole period. Recommended.

**MAA 260 Peter the Great's Army (1): Infantry** by Angus Konstam, plates by David Rickman.

Both author and (American) artist are new to the series. The subject is important and most interesting: nothing less than the army which saw Russia transformed from a backward Asian power to a major player in the European powergame, and the victor of hard-fought campaigns against the late 17th century regional great power — Sweden. The text is clear and authoritative, covering history, organisation and uniforms, the latter supported by good tables of units, facing colours, etc. The monochrome pictures are varied; some of the earlier material will be quite new to most readers, coming from Russian sources, and Viskovatov's plates provide the core. Mr Rickman's colour paintings have a character all their own; they are full of animation and character, slightly 'cartoony' in treatment of anatomy, but careful enough over detail to give most modellers all they practically need. The forthcoming cavalry volume is keenly anticipated; good value, and recommended.

**MAA 261: 18th Century Highlanders** by Stuart Reid, plates by Mike Chappell.

From the same author as Osprey's excellent recent title on the Scottish troops of the Napoleonic period, this will be welcomed by many enthusiasts. It is a most challenging subject for both author and artist, and the challenge seems to have been overcome with authority. It covers the period from the formation of the 43rd Foot from the independent Highland Watch companies in 1739, to the end of the Indian campaign in the very first years of the 19th century. A general chapter on the history and character of these units — enlivened by many specific quotations and references — is followed by a detailed general chapter on clothing and equipment which also draws on primary sources. These are followed by unit-by-unit listings of formation, service, setts and facings, broken down under the periods 1743-48, 1756-63, 1775-83, and 1786-1800, corresponding with the campaigns which prompted the raising of units. These listings include many obscure and short-lived regiments. The monochromes include period engravings and portraits, museum artifacts, and both reconstruction drawings and photographs of actual reconstruction uniforms. Mr Chappell's plates are sharp and clear — a triumph, given the acres of tartan — and include some attractive and unusual outfits; the only reservation is the small size to which some of his figures are reproduced.

**MMA 262: The Army of Gustavus Adolphus (2): Cavalry** by Richard Brzezinski, plates by Richard Hook.

Fully matching the interest and quality of the companion MAA 235, this excellent title covers not only Sweden's native and foreign mercenary horse, but also dragoons, and artillery (and yes, the photographs do include one of the notorious 'leather cannon'). The organisation and character of the mounted arm is described with authority, drawing on primary sources and backed by tables. The author's command of his subject shows in every line; and his explanation of uniforms, equipment, standards, tactics and formations will be of great value to all students of 'pike and shot'. Mr Hook's plates are excellent, and full of sinister character; and the monochromes are very well selected from important sources, many of which will be new to English readers. Taken together, the two MAAs are a genuinely important addition to the 17th century bookshelf; congratulations to all concerned.

**British Military Band Uniforms: Cavalry Regiments and The Household Division** by Wendy Skilton, Midland Publishing, 24 The Hollow, Earl Shilton, Leics LE9 7NA; ISBNs 1-85780-006-0 and -007-9; both 72pp; 8pp colour plates,

mono illu throughout; £9.95 each.

These two very attractive, highly illustrated books will be a boon in particular to figure modellers seeking details of the bandmen of the modern British Army. The carefully chosen and well-reproduced photographs show front and rear views of bandmen and all their kit, not excluding drums and drum horses. Where illustrations are mono, detailed captions describe the uniform distinctions and colours. Although these are slim books, the detail is superb and they can both be happily recommended.

**Drop Zone Flashes of the British Airborne Forces** by Charles A. Edwards. Available from Pass In Review Publications, PO Box 622, Grayslake, Illinois 60030, USA. ISBN 0-943349-02-8; 43pp; mono illu throughout; appendices; \$12.95 including airmail postage to Europe.

Although slim, this little saddle-stitched book is a mine of information for anyone concerned with British airborne forces' insignia. Line drawings with very detailed captions on colours, materials, sizes, etc, illustrate every single flash worn by paratroops, glider troops, airborne artillery, engineers, signals, medics, provosts — you name it, it's here. Additionally, the author describes where each patch was worn. The four pages of photographs really contribute little, but the appendices giving orders of battle for various periods are useful. All in all, a well thought-out and researched booklet, hopefully leading to others on different nationalities.

**Tangled Web: Canadian Infantry Accoutrements 1855-1985** by Jack L. Summers; Museum Restoration Service, PO Box 70, Alexandria Bay, New York 13607, USA (US \$54.50), or PO Box 390, Bloomfield, Ontario, Canada K0K 1G0 (Can. \$54.50); 160 pp; approx 400 illu; £32.00.

The best type of reference book for the 20th century researcher: clear, straightforwardly written, well-illustrated, and researched by a world-respected expert on Canadian military history. Brigadier Summers, who has graced the pages of 'M' in the past, deals with his subject with military precision. His chronological survey of belts, buckles, slings, packs, pouches, frogs, canteens, etc, is easy to read and easy to use. He identifies it; describes it; illustrates it (with a mixture of historical photos, posed reconstruction photos, close-up studies, and drawings); explains its birth, use, and fading away; then passes on to the next objective. A most interesting accompaniment for any collection or library on British equipment, by a master of his subject, and highly recommended.





## The Artillery Forts at Deal and Walmer

MIKE McCORMAC

BEFORE THE REIGN of King Henry VIII, English coastal defences had been built using local funding to counter local threats. As such, they did not form any complete or coherent defensive structure, nor was there any degree of central control by government. As at the time the country was facing threats from Flanders, Spain and France, there was a clear need to have comprehensive defences along both the east and south coasts. To meet this need, during the early 16th century Henry VIII designed what can be regarded as the first national defence scheme. The scheme called for the construction of 20 similar forts which stretched from Kent to Cornwall. Later, the scheme was extended to cover the east coast as far north as Hull. The artillery forts incorporated the latest ideas of the time in both construction and the firepower they were equipped with. They were built in a common style of a circular keep surrounded by semi-circular defences, all to a low profile with thick walls to withstand enemy artillery

IN THIS LATEST installment of our occasional series, we look at two examples of the national defence scheme inaugurated by Henry VIII.

bombardment. The idea behind the symmetrical design was to provide defence against attack from any direction, whilst the circular construction was designed to deflect the shot used at the time.

Built between 1539 and 1540, Deal was the first of the series of forts to be constructed. It comprises a round central 'keep' which is surrounded by six slightly lower semi-circular bastions projecting from it. The entire fort is surrounded by a dry moat with an outer wall that follows the shape of the fort. The upper levels were designed for long-range cannons to be used against shipping, whilst the lower levels were designed to be defended using handguns. When constructed, the castle was manned by a captain, a lieutenant and a company of gunners who could be supplied

as required by the local militia. Deal was never involved in action against the French, its only taste of combat coming during the Civil War when it was defended by the Royalists. It fell to the Parliamentarians after a siege lasting several weeks. The fort was hit by a bomb during World War II, being subsequently rebuilt to its original design.

Walmer was completed in 1540, and is smaller and not as complex as Deal. The central keep is surrounded by four lower bastions, the whole being enclosed by a dry moat. During the 18th century the fort at Walmer became the residence of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. Amongst those to hold this post were William Pitt and the Duke of Wellington. The latter was to die at Walmer, his memory

being preserved by a small museum in the fort.

Unfortunately, concurrent with the building of the forts, developments in artillery rendered them outdated. An example of the capability of the artillery of the time was the 'culverin', a long cannon capable of firing an 18 lb ball for more than a mile. Weapons like this meant that the emphasis of engagement swung from the long-range offence the forts had been built for to more defensive measures. Even though the forts were built to a low, thick walled design, their rounded shape meant they were too large a target for enemy guns. The design of fortification moved on from rounded designs which had been in use up to that time to take on more angular, geometric shapes which presented the smallest target to an enemy attacking from the front. **MI**

**Top of page:**  
*The fort of Deal.*

**Below:**  
*The Fort of Walmer.*





AFTER DECIDING to submit some small piece of military history to scrutiny, the researcher often finds he or she has to make an effort to resist the temptations to explore the intriguing byways which inevitably arise on the journey through the chosen subject. It is the less disciplined traveller who is drawn down the byways. The account which follows began as an attempt to discover something about a little known action which occurred at the end of an unsuccessful imperial campaign. What has resulted is a look not only at the action — at Kirbeka on 10 February 1885 — but also a detour via the battalion and personalities involved.

The story was inspired by the acquisition, some years ago, of a set of three portrait photographs connected with the 10th (Service) Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment. The first by J.J. Gimblett of Tavistock, depicts four men, named as CSM F. Mander, CQMS W. Bailey, Sergeant Major W.J. Davis, and CSM W.P. Jones, and a printed inscription on the mounting reads: 'Present at the Battle of Kirbeka, 10th Feb, 1885. Now serving with the 10th Service Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment, and whose total services reach 142 years'. A pencil written note on the reverse reads, 'From CSM W.P. Jones To Miss A.L. Dudley And Pte. W.P. Jones...', adding sternly, '...And Take Care Of It!'. The second is a portrait of CSM Jones alone, and the third I have assumed is Private W.P. Jones.

The 10th Battalion South Staffords was part of the Training Reserve of Kitchener's New Army, and men such as these former long-service regulars were the means by which the millions of enthusiastic but raw young men were being transformed, at special camps established all over the country, into fighting men. It is possible that the four veterans had their photograph taken to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of their involvement in

## Veterans of Kirbeka

CHRIS COOGAN

ALTHOUGH THE STORY of 'Gordon of Khartoum' has been well popularised, one little-known action by the River Column has received scant attention. Here we remedy this through the biographies of four survivors.

the battle, as I later discovered it had been reproduced in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of 27 February 1915 with the following short biographies printed beneath it:

**'Co.-Qmr.-Serat. W. Bailey.**

'Enlisted in the 3rd Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment at Longton in November 1880, and joined the South Staffordshire Regiment on Feb. 28, 1881, going with the 2nd Battalion to Tralee in Ireland. He embarked on the troopship Himalaya on September 22, 1880, to join the 1st South

Staffordshire Regiment stationed at Malta and proceeded with this battalion to Egypt, where he saw service on the Nile and was present at the Battle of Kirbeka on Feb. 10, 1885. He afterwards saw service with this battalion at Gibraltar until May 19, 1889. He joined the 4th Battalion of the South Staffordshire Regiment at Lichfield, and served with this battalion in the Boer War, being attached to Lord Methuen's Division at Kimberley, in General Paget's Brigade. He was present at the capture of General Prinsloo and 3,000 prisoners at Fourisberg.

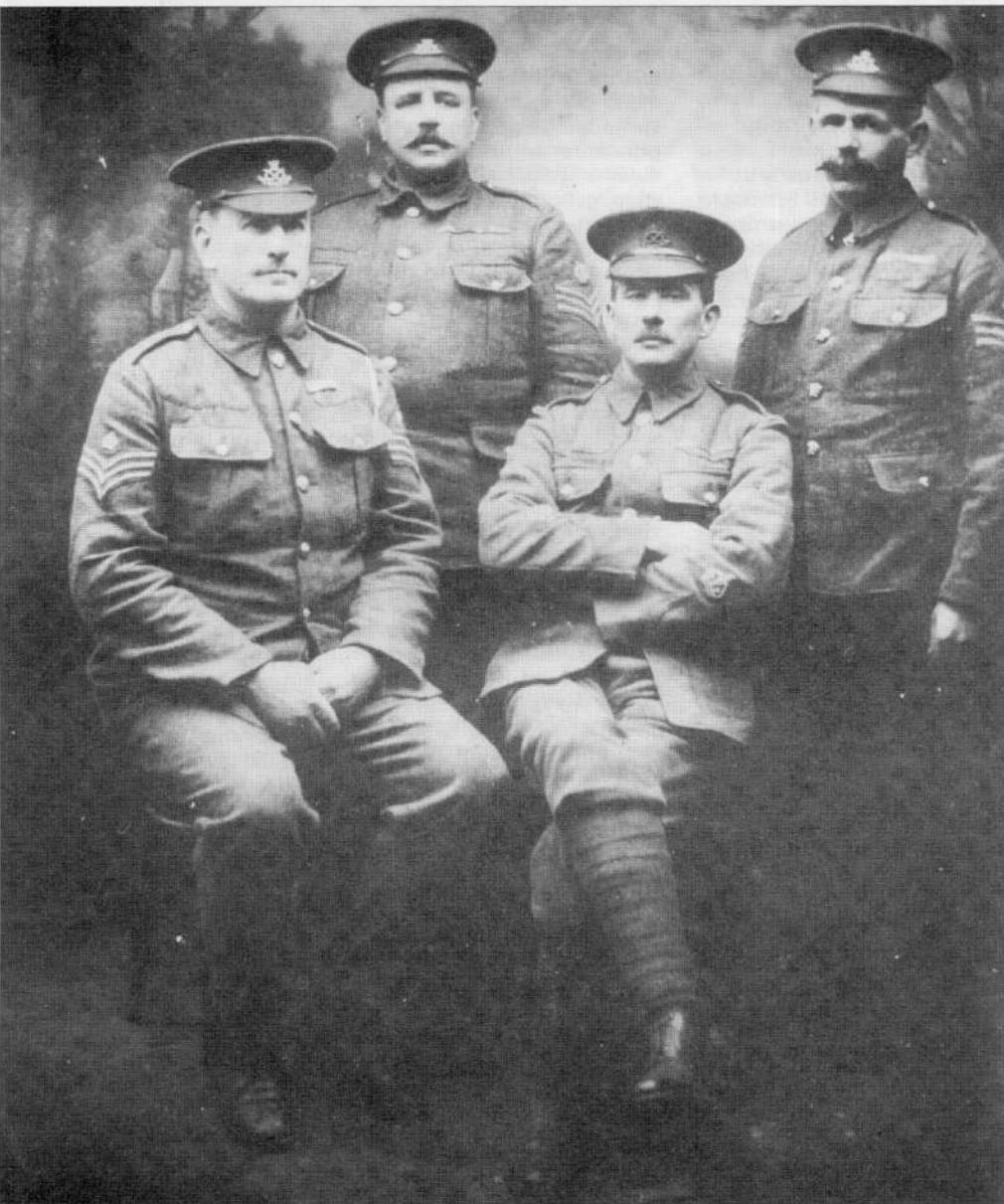
After returning to England, he again volunteered for service in South Africa with the 3rd Battalion Cheshire Regiment and served until the end of the war. He is now serving with the 10th (Service) Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment at Tavistock, Devon.

**'Sergt.-Major W. Davis.**

'Sergt.-Major Davis joined 38th (now South Staffordshire) Regiment on September 14th 1876, at Manchester, and embarked for foreign service on Aug. 9, 1880. He served in the Egyptian Campaign, 1882, being one of the first soldiers to land after the bombardment of Alexandria. He also served in the Nile Campaign, 1884-85, and the frontier campaign in the Soudan, and is now serving with the 10th (Service) Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment.

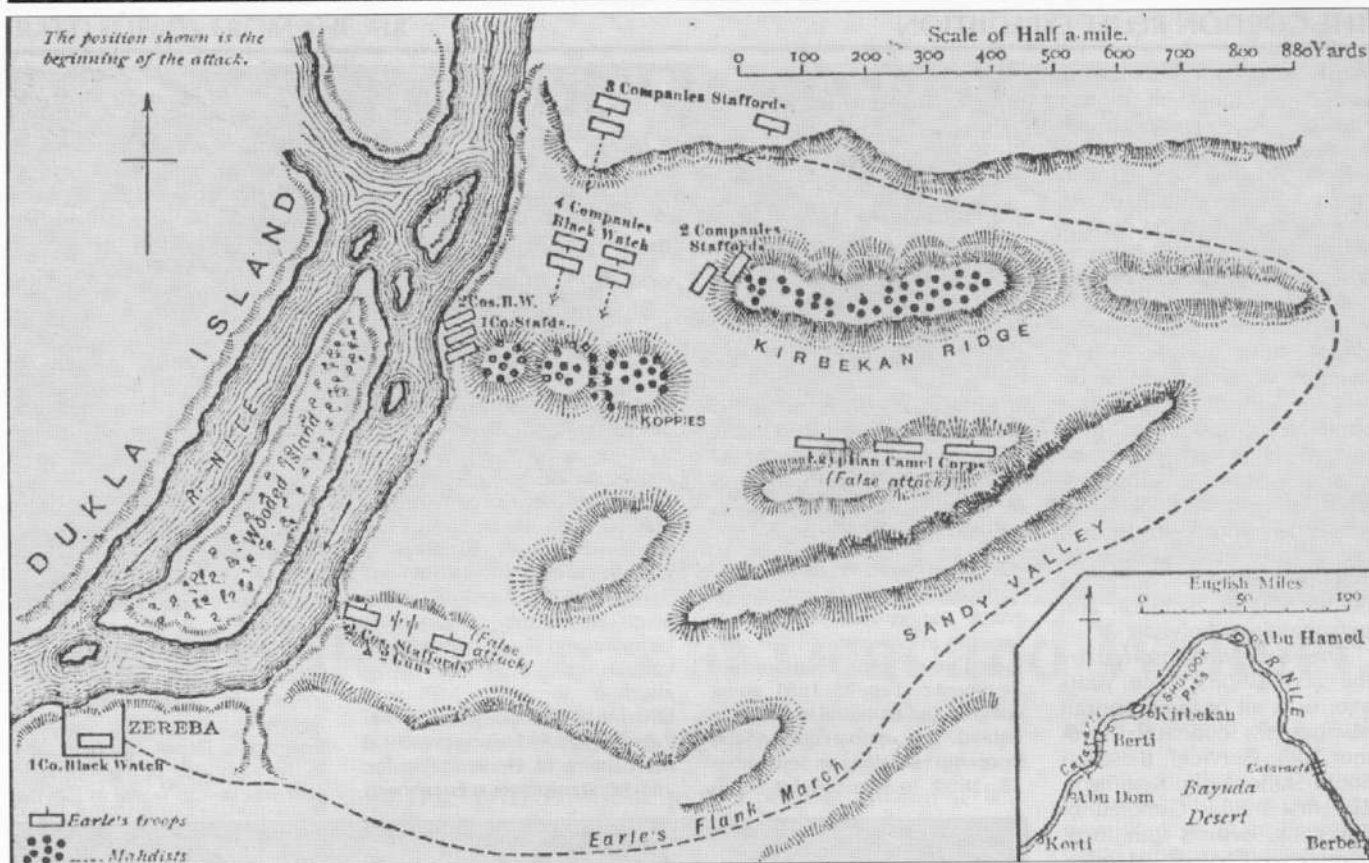
**'Co.-Sergt.-Major F. Mander.**

'Co.-Sergt.-Major F. Mander joined the South Staffordshire Regiment in 1881 at the Regimental Depot, Lichfield, and in the early part of the following year was sent to Tralee to join the



'Present at the Battle of Kirbeka, 10th Feb. 1885'.  
Left to right, CQMS F. Mander, CQMS W. Bailey, SM W. J. Davis, CSM W. P. Jones, 10th (Service) Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment, Tavistock, February 1915.





The map of the action given in Forbes' Battles of the Nineteenth Century.

2nd Battalion. In the early part of 1883 he joined the 1st Battalion at Malta, and shortly afterwards proceeded to Egypt, the battalion taking part in the Gordon Relief Expedition. After several changes of station, the battalion was sent to Gibraltar, and after a lengthy stay in that command Serjt.-Major Mander was taken ill with enteric fever and was sent home to be again posted to the 2nd Battalion. Shortly afterwards, he was posted to the permanent staff of the 4th Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment, and in 1898 he was posted to the permanent staff of the 3rd Volunteer Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment.

#### 'Co.-Sergt.-Major W.P. Jones.

'Co.-Sergt.-Major W.P. Jones joined the South Staffordshire Regiment in 1881 at the Regimental Depot, Lichfield, and in the early part of the following year was sent to Tralee, Killarney,

and other places with the 2nd (80th) Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment. That part of Ireland at that time was in a very disturbed state. He next proceeded to Malta to join the 1st (38th) Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment, whence he sailed to Egypt, going through the Egyptian Campaign, including the Nile Expedition for the relief of General Gordon, during which the 1st (38th) Battalion, with the Black Watch, fought the battle of Kibekkan. On Feb. 10, 1885, after several charges, the position was taken, although it cost many lives, including the General in command, Major-General Earle CB, and Col. P.H. Eyre, commanding the 1st (38th) Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment, and Col. Coveny, of the Black Watch. The sergeant-major also served in the frontier campaign, &c. Later, he proceeded to Gibraltar, and was on the Garrison Staff (Garrison Military Police) in charge of the new Defence Works when the Commander-in-Chief, HRH the

Duke of Cambridge, visited the works. He has served in all the South Staffordshire Battalions at different times. From September 1897, to 1906, he was colour-sergeant-instructor to the E (Tipton) Company of Volunteers, and was then transferred to the headquarters at Wolverhampton. He possesses the Egyptian medal and clasps and the Khedive's Star, and the long service and good conduct medals. One of his sons, Priv. W.P. Jones, is in the 10th Battalion with his father, and another is Priv. A.J. Jones, of the 9th Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

In addition to this, my attention was later brought to another newspaper article, this time in the *Wolverhampton Express and Star* dated in 1957, about the then 95-year old former CSM Jones, who was still living in Tipton, and who was due to be one of the special guests at a parade to present a set of silver

drums to the South Staffords. The accompanying photograph showed a keen eyed and alert veteran wearing his Egypt medal with two bars, Long Service & Good Conduct medal, MSM, and Khedive's Star, together with a the silver 'Services Rendered' badge on his right breast.

What of the events behind this story of long service in a county regiment in the late Victorian period?

The 38th (1st Staffordshire) Regiment moved from Manchester in July 1877 to Dublin. During its three years in Ireland, it was to follow the usual pattern in Irish postings at that time, being split up into detachments, providing assistance to the Civil Power during a period of great unrest in the countryside, against the background of riots, evictions of tenant farmers, and Land League agitation. Similarly,



Officers and NCOs of 'G' Company at Suez in March 1883. The Staffords were to return to Malta a few weeks after this photograph was taken, only to find themselves in Egypt again by the following February, en route to the Sudan. [Museum of the Staffordshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's)]



the 80th (Staffordshire Volunteers) Regiment found itself involved in similar detachment duties in the West of the country after returning, in May 1880, from service in the Sekukuni and Zulu campaigns. The 38th, however, moved on to Malta in July 1880, where they were quartered in Floriana Barracks.

In the amalgamations of 1881, the 38th and the 80th became the 1st and 2nd battalions of the South Staffordshire Regiment. The new regiment soon found it necessary to utilise one of the guiding principles of Cardwell's reforms — that of the home battalion reinforcing the overseas battalion with drafts to keep up its strength. In fact, medal roll evidence seems to suggest that this was done on a relatively large scale at this time in the South Staffords. Bailey, Mander and Jones all appear to have transferred with drafts to the first battalion, which had recently returned from Alexandria to Malta. Such drafts would presumably have been required to bring the battalion, in which Davis was already serving, up to strength after its involvement in the Egyptian campaign of 1882. Having left Egypt in May 1883, the battalion was to return within a year and, by December 1884, was again on the Nile, but this time much further south, in the Sudan, at Korti. There it formed one component of the force being marshalled to take part in the expedition to rescue General Gordon, besieged at Khartoum. It was to join the River Column, that part of the force being sent up the river in whaleboats. In addition to the Staffords, the column, commanded by Major-General W. Earle, consisted of a squadron of the 19th Hussars, 1st Black Watch, a company of 1st Gordon Highlanders, 2nd Duke of Cornwall's LI, a battery of Egyptian artillery, and an Egyptian camel corps. Their journey up the river was tortuous and fraught with hazards. While the Hussars and the Camel Corps scouted ahead on each bank, the rest of the column, aided by specially recruited Canadian 'voyageurs', struggled up the river, battling against rapids, the searing heat, and the heavy wear and tear on men, clothing and equipment brought about by the frequent need to 'portage', or manhandle, the boats over the many dangerous and rocky stretches of water. For this same reason,



An illustration from the *Graphic*, showing the Staffords embarking from Korti in the whalers.

the struggling force often found itself split up, and would have presented a vulnerable target for a Dervish force sweeping down upon it from the desert. Such an attack never materialised, however, and, in spite of the vicissitudes it had undergone, the River Column's cohesion and discipline remained intact.

When the column did encounter a Dervish force, at Kibekkan on 9 February, it found that the enemy had chosen instead to position itself upon a collection of rocky hills on the right bank of the river. The troops earmarked for the assault. The South Staffords and the Black Watch put aside their khaki uniforms and drew their scarlet jackets out of the baggage, so as to present a more warlike appearance to the enemy. The following day, at 07:00, with the thermometer registering 46°, and having positioned some companies of the artillery and some of the Camel Corps in position to present a false attack, Earle led the remaining twelve companies, supported by the hussars and Camel Corps, out of camp. Taking advantage of low-lying ground, the small force marched around the Dervishes' left flank to attack them in the rear.

After a vicious firefight for possession of Kibekkan Ridge, the Dervish riflemen were winkled out from their positions among the rocks by a determined bayonet charge, and driven from the field. Some retreated through a ravine between companies of both battalions, the Black Watch having to fall back to allow the Staffords to pour volleys into the unfortunate fugi-

tives. Others took to the river, attempting to swim across, but this time it was the turn of a company of Highlanders, guarding the bank, to wreak havoc among them with the Martini-Henry.

Although the 3½-hour action had been well executed and British casualties light, an unusual turn of events were the deaths in action, not only of both Lieutenant-Colonels Coveney of the Black Watch and Eyre of the South Staffords, but also that of the column's commander, Major-General Earle, shot as he was personally leading an attack on a small hut being used as a store by the Dervishes.

Although the news of the fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon had been received and imparted to the officers of the column, the men were not to know until after the battle. Such news, together with the sudden loss of their senior commanders, and all coming hard on the heels of what had been a successful action, must have been a great disappointment to the force. However, the *raison d'être* of the whole enterprise had ceased to exist, and the River Column was recalled on 24 February. In June of the following year, the 1st South Staffords left Egypt for Gibraltar.

Although the campaign had failed in its objective, many officers, including Viscount Wolseley himself, had nothing but praise for the conduct of the other ranks during this most difficult of expeditions. Men had been called upon not only to fight a numerous and highly motivated enemy, but also to perform prodigious feats of physical exertion in an extremely hostile climate. By

the outbreak of the Great War, the Battle of Kibekkan, if it remained anywhere in the public memory, had faded into a small affair at the end of an abortive imperial campaign. However, it should not surprise us that men such as Mander, Bailey, Davis and Jones, although now in middle age, should be recalled to the colours as valued trainers of Kitchener's New Armies, at a time when it had been recognised that the same values which they as young men had shown — of dogged endurance and devotion to duty in a harsh environment — would again be required by the nation from the citizen-soldiers of the modern mass army. **MI**

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The files of Mr G.T. Lowe, Wolverhampton.



# ON THE SCREEN

## Video releases to buy:

**Yojimbo** (Connoisseur: PG)

**Django** (Art House: 18)

**Django Strikes Again** (Aktiv: 18)

**A Bullet for the General** (Aktiv: 18)

**Face to Face** (Aktiv: 18)

**Kill and Pray** (Aktiv: 15)

**American Civil War** (Simitar: E)

**Great Indian Wars** (Simitar: E)

**Gunfighters of the Old West** (Simitar: E)

THE VETERAN Japanese director Akira Kurosawa's film career spans from 1936 to the present day. Several of his films concern samurai warriors, including *The Seven Samurai* (1954) (reviewed 'MI' 47), *Throne of Blood* (1957) (reviewed 'MI' 47), *Kagemusha* (1980) (reviewed 'MI' 27) and *Ran* (1985) (reviewed 'MI' 9). *Yojimbo/The Bodyguard* (1961) is set in 1860, towards the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Sanjuro Kuwabatake (Toshiro Mifune), an unemployed ronin samurai, wanders into a small mountain village terrorised by two warring factions who live barricaded at opposite ends of the main street. One is led by Seibei, and the other by Seibei's ex-right-hand man Ushitora. Sanjuro, true to his profession, hires himself out, at first to Seibei. Learning that he is to be double-crossed and killed, he becomes Ushitora's personal bodyguard. However, Ushitora's men torture him for releasing a female prisoner. While Ushitora's men massacre Seibei's faction, the samurai, who has escaped, recuperates in the country in preparation for his own revenge.

The film is very much in the tradition of *jidai-geki*, the samurai action film, with an emphasis on graphic violence and black humour. Toshiro Mifune is excellent in the title role, and this video release retains Kurosawa's wide-screen compositions.

Kurosawa evidently was an admirer of John Ford, and two of his films were to be remade as Hollywood westerns: *Rashomon* (1951) was remade by Martin Ritt as *The Outrage* (1964), while *The Seven Samurai* became John Sturges' *The Magnificent Seven* (1960). *Yojimbo* was appropriated by Italian director Sergio Leone for *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964), the first of the trilogy of films about the Man With No Name starring Clint Eastwood. *Yojimbo* arguably also provided the inspiration for Sergio Corbucci's *Django* (1966).

*Django* begins soon after the American Civil War. A loner called Django (Franco Nero) arrives in a town near the Mexican border, controlled by ex-Confederate soldiers led by a Major Jackson, and some Mexican bandits. Django wipes out most of the Major's men with the machine-gun which he keeps in the coffin he drags around

behind him. He then helps the bandits raid a Mexican fort to steal some gold. However, when the bandit leader refuses to hand Django his share, it will not be long before the bodycount will start rapidly rising again.

The only true sequel to *Django*, in that the title role was again played by Franco Nero, was Ted Archer's *Django Strikes Again/Il Grande Ritorno Di Django* (1987). It begins with Django, having buried his guns in a grave marked by his own name, training to become a priest. He learns from a dying woman that their daughter has been kidnapped along with other villagers by Count Orlowsky, a Hungarian officer with troops still in Mexico after the death of Maximilian. He remonstrates with Orlowsky, but is beaten up and made to work as a slave in a silver mine. However, he escapes, and it is not long before he is again dealing out death with his machine-gun, mounted on a hearse.

This film was shot in Columbia and has a similarly high bodycount. Donald Pleasance makes an appearance as a Scottish lepidopterist who has been enslaved by Orlowsky.

The success of *A Fistful of Dollars* and *For a Few Dollars More* (1965) encouraged producers from Italy, Spain and West Germany to invest in more Westerns. These 'spaghetti westerns' typically had Italian directors, Spanish crews, and an international cast. Many were shot in the region of Almeida, in southern Spain. Some 300 spaghetti westerns were released in Italy between 1963 and 1969, with the peak year of production being in 1966-67. They were typically action-packed and aimed at an audience known for a low boredom threshold. However, a number of politically radical Italian filmmakers realised that the genre could be appropriated to convey their views. Aktiv have included three of the best known in their spaghetti western series.

Arguably the first of such 'political' westerns was Damiano Damiani's *A Bullet for the General/Quien Sabe?* (1966) set during the Mexican Revolution of 1910-20. An American mercenary called Bill Tate, 'The Gringo' (Lou Castel) ensures he is captured by revolutionary bandit leader 'El Chuncho' (Gian Maria Volonte). He intends that El Chuncho will lead him to revolutionary leader Elias whom he is being paid by the *federales* to assassinate with a golden bullet. First he has to prove himself by participating in raids to steal arms from the *federales* which will be sold to Elias. However, he has to make a choice between carrying out the assassination, or saving El Chuncho from execution by his brother Santo (Klaus Kinski), a religious maniac, for allowing a town to be massa-

cred.

*A Bullet for the General* is one of the most explicitly political of Italian westerns, and features a final twist that can be read as a rejection of interventionism. Scriptwriter Franco Solinas, a member of the Italian Communist Party, also penned Gillo Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers/La Battaglia di Algeri* (1966), about the French in Algeria, and *Burn!!/Queimada!* (1969), about British intervention in the Republic of Queimada in 1848. Gian Maria Volonte, the bandit chief in the first two *Dollars* films, had been blacklisted for being a Communist, and it was Sergio Leone who defied this to employ him. Director Damiano Damiani's one other political western was *A Genius/Un Genio, Due Compari, Un Pollo* (aka *Nobody is the Greatest*) (1975).

Carlo Lizzani's *Requiescant/Kill and Pray* (1967) begins with a massacre of Mexican civilians by Union army soldiers to whom they have surrendered in order to live peaceably on a reservation. The sole survivor, a young boy, is found and brought up by an itinerant American preacher with his wife and daughter, Princy. Years later, his sister Princy runs away from home to become a saloon dancer. Requiescant (Lou Castel), who is training to be a preacher, decides to bring her back. When by chance he witnesses a hold-up, he discovers he has a natural talent for gunplay. He finds Princy working for James Bello Ferguson (Mark Damon), who he discovers was responsible for the massacre. In bringing about Damon's downfall, he is converted to the revolutionary cause by a radical priest, Don Juan.

Don Juan was played by Pier Paolo Pasolini, an intellectual Marxist filmmaker who had apparently been impressed by *A Bullet for the General*. Pasolini's interest in Marxism and radical Catholicism had been evident in his version of the life of Christ, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (1964). The sexual, violent and blasphemous content of later films such as *Salo — The 120 Days of Sodom* (1975) were to lead to clashes with both the church and the authorities. Pasolini was eventually bludgeoned to death by a youth who claimed he had made homosexual advances to him. It is possible that Pasolini had some influence on *Requiescant*, which includes a gay villain, a revolutionary priest, sado-masochism and drug-taking. The title, Latin for 'let them rest', is the name given to the central character because he says a prayer over the bodies of those he has just killed! Lizzani's one other political western was *The Hills Run Red* (1966), which was a big commercial success in Italy.

The last in Aktiv's trilogy of political spaghetti westerns is Franco Solima's *Face to Face/Faccia a Faccia* (1967). It begins with college professor Brad Dexter (Gian

Maria Volonte) leaving Boston for Texas for the sake of his health. He prevents Mexican Solomon 'Beauregard' Bennett (Thomas Milan) from being lynched, not realising he is a notorious bandit leader. Dexter joins Bennett's Raiders and becomes impressed by their instinctual use of violence. He then uses his intellect to take them over, but in doing so alienates Bennett. His actions ultimately lead to the destruction of the gang.

The film can be read as an allegory about European Fascism, as a community come under the control of a dictator. Cuban actor Tomas Milan, who plays Bennett, also featured in Solima's other political westerns, *The Big Gundown* (1966) and *Run, Man, Run* (1968) and other spaghetti westerns like *Django Kill* (1967). *Face to Face* features a catchy score by Ennio Morricone, who scored the *Dollars* trilogy.

Some critics argued that populist cinema was an inappropriate medium to convey politically radical messages. A typical audience may not make the connection between the story and, for example, CIA activities in Latin America. However, by dealing with poor communities and by taking on themes of colonialism and interventionism, spaghetti westerns have proved to be popular with audiences in Third World countries.

Western buffs may also find some interest in three programmes released by Simitar. *American Civil War* begins with the causes that led up to the war. The narration is illustrated almost exclusively by the use of contemporary photographs and clips from early feature films such as D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *Abraham Lincoln* (1930), Buster Keaton's *The General* (1926) and Michael Curtiz's *Santa Fe Trail* (1940).

*The Great Indian Wars* deals with the major Indian wars from 1840 up to the massacre of Sioux Indians at Wounded Knee fifty years later. The battle of Little Big Horn is appropriately illustrated with footage from Raoul Walsh's *They Died With Their Boots On* (1941). Clips from some minor cavalry westerns are used repeatedly *ad nauseam*. The overuse of western film background music behind the narration becomes intrusive.

*Gunfighters of the Old West* deals with characters such as Wild Bill Hickock, Buffalo Bill, Wyatt Earp, Jesse James, Billy the Kid, the Youngers and the Daltons. Again the constant use of background music is distracting, but film clips are used with more care than the other two programmes. Extracts include footage from George Marshall's *When the Daltons Rode* (1940), John Ford's *My Darling Clementine* (1946), Samuel Fuller's *I Shot Jesse James* (1950), Arthur Penn's *The Left-Handed Gun* (1958) and Philip Kaufman's *The Great Northfield Minnesota Raid* (1976).

Stephen J. Greenhill



# The Young Alexander

FROM HIS first battle, Alexander the Great was successful in war. Myth often replaces fact in our knowledge of Alexander, but few doubt his genius. The privileged son of charismatic and gifted parents, he could have turned out spoilt and useless. What made him one of the world's greatest commanders?

Alexander was born in 356 BC at Pella in Macedonia, the son of Philip II and Olympias, a Greek. Both parents were strong and impulsive in temperament. The scars covering Philip's body showed his bravery and almost foolhardy delight in battle. Within a few years he had transformed the Macedonian army into a professional, well-balanced force, capable of campaigning all year round. In his youth, as a hostage in Thebes, he had learnt the importance of drill, tactics and co-operation between arms from the Theban General Epaminondas.

Alexander's early education seems to have been in the hands of his mother, Olympias. Ambitious, iron-willed and possessed of a murderous temper, she did all she could to protect Alexander's interests and career. He would have had the typical education of any young nobleman: hunting, music, etiquette, debating and poetry.

In 343 King Philip intervened in his son's education. At the age of 13, along with the sons of leading Macedonian citizens and nobles, Alexander entered the Basilikoi Paidēs, the Royal Pages. A special school was established for them, away from the intrigues of the Macedonian court.

Alexander's tutor was now the philosopher Aristotle. A modern philosopher, Bertrand Russell, speculated that the vigorous Alexander 'would have been bored by the prosy old pedant' but his wide interests would have matched Alexander's boyhood curiosity. He was inspired with interest in philosophy, medicine, biology and scientific investigation, but was later to advance beyond his teachers' narrow racist precept that non-Greeks should be treated as slaves.

The young prince would

DAVID COWARD

'THE GREAT COMMANDERS' is an important new six-part television series which examines the nature of leadership, looking at some of the greatest military commanders in history. The series is scheduled for transmission on Channel 4 on Sunday evenings from 21 November. Here we look at the early career of Alexander, later to be known as 'the Great'.

have read widely, but his favourite book was Homer's *Illiad*, his favourite character Achilles, from whom, along with Heracles, his family claimed descent. He took Achilles as his model of heroic virtue.

Formal schooling ended in 340 BC. Alexander was appointed Regent of Macedonia while his father attacked Byzantium. A Thracian people, the Maedi, revolted, thinking Alexander would not act against them. They were defeated. Alexander turned their mountain stronghold into a Macedonian garrison, which he renamed Alexandropolis. Soon many more cities would bear his name.

Philip was a skilled general. At his side Alexander learned much of Philip's shrewd common sense and understanding of war, campaigning against the Scythians, a nation of horse archers, and marching to the banks of the Danube against the Triballians, a fierce people expert in guerrilla warfare. His first major battle came in 338 BC. The Greek United Armies, concerned at the rise of Macedonian supremacy, confronted Philip at the battle of Chaeronea. Aged 18, Alexander was entrusted with the cavalry on Philip's left wing. Using the tactic of the oblique advance he had learnt from Epaminondas, Philip moved forward with his phalanx. Philip had given his heavy infantry, already better trained than the Greek citizen hoplites, an even greater reach than the hoplite spears by equipping them with the Sarissa, a pike recorded up to 5.5 metres long.

On contact the phalanx feigned retreat, a difficult manoeuvre demonstrating their quality. The Athenians were drawn forward, creating a

gap in the allied line. Charging at the head of the wedge of Hetairoi, or Companion Cavalry, Alexander drove through the gap. He massacred the Sacred Band, a battalion of 300 élite Theban troops on the right flank of the Greek armies.

The victory brought two benefits for Alexander. It was an opportunity to demonstrate his powers of command and his courage in battle, which helped secure his claim to the succession. He had also learnt at first hand the value of the oblique tactic, co-ordination between arms and well-timed shock action that would defeat the Persian Empire. Greece was now at Philip's mercy, but his respect for the Athenian dead, and his generosity towards the defeated, brought reconciliation with submission; it was a policy that would later serve his son well in Asia.

Philip planned to unite the Greeks behind him by invading Persia to exact revenge for their invasion of Greece 150 years before. To the practical Philip this also served to extend Macedonian wealth and power. Possibly to secure the support of his nobles, he married a Macedonian. Alexander found his position as heir in jeopardy, and after a bitter quarrel with his father at the marriage feast, he went into exile. Father and son were soon reconciled, but Alexander's many half brothers and sisters remained a threat to his succession. In 336 Philip was assassinated by one of his bodyguards.

Alexander moved swiftly to secure the throne, ordering the execution of rivals. Acclaimed by an army indifferent to the family murders that marked every succession, he led them in the ancient ritual of purification between two halves of a dog's corpse. He owed almost everything to Philip. Alexander

inherited a rich, powerful and united Macedonia, the Greek city states largely subjugated, a Persian campaign and a lean, balanced and experienced professional army to fight it. Philip had already ordered an advanced party of 10,000 into Asia under his General Parmenio. To these plans and preparations Alexander would add a touch of genius unique to the history of warfare.

Alexander understood the necessity of operating from a secure base; it was the dominant feature in his strategy from the moment he became King. The Greeks saw Philip's death as their liberation. Alexander marched swiftly southwards. The Thessalians barred his march into Greece at the narrow pass at Tempe, but submitted when his pioneers cut a military road through the rocky cliffs of Mount Ossa and he came up behind them.

Alexander returned to Macedonia to pacify the troublesome northern tribes and ensure that his rear would be secured when he entered Asia. He dealt first with the Thracians, who held a mountain pass barricaded with waggons. When the Macedonians advanced, the Thracians rolled their waggons downhill at the phalanx. But Alexander had anticipated their plans. He told his men to part ranks to let the waggons through or lie on the ground with their shields protecting their bodies so the waggons would bounce over them without harm. Arrian writes that there were no casualties, but it seems inevitable that a few legs must have been broken. The phalanx then rose from the ground and advanced. With the position they thought impregnable about to be taken, the panic-stricken Thracians fled.

His next opponents, the Triballians, were provoked into attacking a bait of light missile troops. They were then surrounded by a surprise pincer movement of infantry and cavalry and defeated. Moving on against the Getae, a surprise night crossing of the Danube on skins stuffed with grass led to their rout the next morning. Perhaps now overconfident, in his eagerness to pursue the Illyrian tribes Alexander







# The Young Alexander

Sidon, 333 BC



Chaeronea,  
338 BC

See article on page 39